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The Alberta Journal of Educational Research

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Editorial

The *Alberta Journal of Educational Research* has a lengthy tradition as an eclectic, scholarly journal publishing reports on "systematic enquiry into education" for a national and international audience. As the new editor of *AJER*, I am pleased to take up the challenge of combining eclecticism with quality while working to extend *AJER*'s reach in terms of both readership and the range of pertinent scholarly research and enquiry that is reported in this journal. I will not be the first editor of *AJER* who has worked toward such ends. In addition to encouraging the submission of manuscripts on many subjects, my predecessors have sponsored issues that were dedicated to a variety of topical themes in education and have taken other initiatives to make *AJER*'s coverage of research in education as wide ranging and inclusive as possible. I will continue many of my predecessors' thoughtful practices while incorporating some innovations of my own.

Introducing Research Notes

In this March 1996 issue of *AJER* I am introducing a new section: *AJER Research Notes*. My idea is to provide a means for educational researchers to communicate with one another about their research-in-progress. *AJER* is a particularly promising vehicle for this sort of exchange because it is so widely indexed both nationally and internationally.

As a way of getting the *Research Notes* section started I have invited some colleagues to try out the idea of writing a note. By means of my invitations to these particular individuals I have emphasized diversity in several ways. These scholars are engaged in areas of, and approaches to, research and enquiry that differ substantially from one another and from much of the work that has been published in *AJER* to this time. I want to thank the first contributors to this section for their valiant efforts to figure out what a research note might look like; these efforts have greatly assisted me in developing some guidelines for future notes. As well the first notes make interesting reading!

I welcome comments on any aspect of this *Research Notes* initiative and welcome submissions of research notes for publication, beginning with the December 1996 issue of *AJER*. To distinguish submissions in this section of *AJER* from the more developed reports on completed research projects that are published as full articles, I have established a few initial guidelines for *Research Notes*. The guidelines appear at the beginning of the *AJER Research Notes* section.

Theme Issues

In the meantime, I am also pleased to announce the upcoming publication of two theme issues of *AJER*. "Education and Development: Past Lessons, Present Crises, Future Possibilities" will appear in June 1996. The issue will be coedited by Raj Pannu and Swee Hin Toh (University of Alberta). "Secondary Schools and the Canadian Mosaic: The Exemplary Schools Project" will be published in September 1996. The issue will be coedited by Jane Gaskell (University of British Columbia) and David MacKinnon (Acadia University). Both of these

collections represent a further expansion of the topics that *AJER* has featured in theme issues and widens the circle of educational researchers who have acted as guest editors for *AJER*.

And Thank Yous

I want to thank my immediate predecessor as editor Judy Cameron for her generous collegial assistance and advice that, together with up-to-date files and documentation, have made my transition to this job uncomplicated. Judy has thus allowed me to concentrate on *AJER*'s present needs and future possibilities rather than being bogged down in debts to the past.

Providing invaluable assistance to Judy and subsequently to me in our editorial work have been those many colleagues, including *AJER*'s consulting editors, who have reviewed manuscripts for us. The names of those people who served as reviewers during 1995 appear in this, the first issue of the 1996 volume. After only a handful of months as editor I already understand why other editors of scholarly journals so often border on the effusive in their words of appreciation to reviewers. I am impressed by the responsible, constructive, and punctual commentary that so many reviewers provide. The quality of this effort to participate in the scholarly research and review process is a reassuring counterexample to the stereotype of an academic community characterized largely by self-absorption and arrogance.

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PS

Also appearing for the first time in this issue, and about to become a regular feature, is an order form to make it simple and painless for you and all your colleagues to purchase *AJER* subscriptions and/or individual issues that may be of particular interest.

Marianne Sorensen

and

Harvey Krahn

University of Alberta

Attitudes Toward Immigrants: A Test of Two Theories¹

Two competing theories of intergroup relations are tested in this analysis of attitudes toward immigrants. The first proposes that higher education produces more liberal attitudes, with a corollary hypothesis predicting greater acceptance of diversity among social science and humanities graduates. Realistic group conflict theory states that increased competition over scarce resources results in greater intergroup conflict and lower levels of acceptance of the "out group." Analyses of panel survey data (1985-1992) from a study of Edmonton high school seniors reveal that young people who went on to higher education already expressed more positive attitudes toward immigrants when leaving high school. Exposure to higher education had a further liberalizing effect on attitudes. Alternatively, individuals who did not continue their education became somewhat less accepting of immigrants over time. Differences in university program were not related to variations in attitudes toward immigrants. Evidence of less liberal attitudes among young people who had experienced more labor market difficulties was also not found.

Deux théories rivales de relations intergroupes sont mises à l'épreuve dans cette analyse traitant des attitudes envers les immigrant(e)s. La première stipule que l'éducation supérieure produit des attitudes plus libérales et prédit qu'on trouvera une plus grande acceptation de la diversité parmi les personnes diplômées en sciences sociales et en lettres. La théorie dite réaliste des conflits intergroupes énonce qu'une plus grande rivalité entre personnes s'efforçant d'obtenir des ressources de plus en plus rares entraîne des conflits plus aigus entre les groupes et une diminution des niveaux d'acceptation envers le "hors-groupe." Des analyses de données d'enquêtes (1985-1992) effectuées parmi les élèves du secondaire deuxième cycle à Edmonton, en Alberta, révèlent que les jeunes qui avaient poursuivi leurs études au niveau universitaire exprimaient déjà des attitudes plus positives à leur départ du secondaire. L'éducation supérieure continue à exercer une influence libératrice sur leurs attitudes. De même, les jeunes qui n'avaient pas poursuivi leurs études sont devenu(e)s moins tolérant(e)s des immigrant(e)s avec le temps. Il n'y avait pas de lien entre les différences du programme universitaire et les variations des attitudes envers les immigrant(e)s. Il ne semble pas que les attitudes libérales soient affectées négativement chez les jeunes qui avaient éprouvé plus de difficultés sur le marché du travail.

Introduction

Immigration invokes a wide variety of strongly held opinions from Canadians. These range from the belief that immigrants economically and demographical-

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ly benefit society to the alternative position that they take jobs away from the Canadian-born population and incur heavy public costs. The latter kind of response tends to prevail despite the fact that new arrivals are almost twice as likely as the Canadian-born population to have some university training (Trovato & Grindstaff, 1986). For example, among those immigrating to Alberta in 1991 between the ages of 20 and 39, 50% had some postsecondary education and 21% had a university degree (Alberta Economic Development and Tourism, 1993). Consequently, immigrants tend to make positive labor market contributions after arriving in Canada. A recent national study by the Economic Council of Canada (ECC, 1991a) found that immigration has little if any effect on national unemployment rates.

Moreover, in the face of an aging population and a nonreplacement birth rate, immigration has also been shown to be an important source of population growth. Without immigration the ratio of older dependents to labor force participants would increase much faster than its current rate. But immigration policy serves as an instrument of population management. Again, using the Alberta example population projections estimate that, maintaining the current level of immigration, Alberta's population will have a net increase of over 10% by the year 2015 through immigration alone.

The number of immigrants arriving in Canada has increased dramatically in the past decade as a result of changing government policies in response to concerns about an aging population. In 1985 only 84,000 immigrants were admitted (down from 129,000 in 1981). By 1992, the number of immigrants arriving annually had risen to close to 250,000 (Badets, 1993, p. 8). And over the past few decades, the source countries have also changed. Specifically, we have witnessed a substantial increase in the number of immigrants from third world countries. Before 1961 90% of the immigrants arriving in Canada had been born in Europe. Between 1981 and 1991 only 25% were European-born (Badets, 1993).

Although Alberta is not usually viewed as a primary target province for newcomers, the 1991 Census revealed that it contained the third largest proportion of immigrants (15.1%), following Ontario (23.7%) and British Columbia (22.3%). Alberta also contains the third largest proportion of immigrants from Asian and African countries. The top five source countries of immigrants to Alberta in 1991 were Hong Kong, Vietnam, China, India, and the Philippines (Alberta Economic Development and Tourism, 1993).

Together these facts suggest that it is becoming increasingly important to consider issues of race relations when examining attitudes toward immigrants and for that matter multiculturalism (Mansfield & Kehoe, 1994). Although Canada has not experienced large amounts of racial conflict, there is evidence of racial discrimination (Reitz, 1988). Historical research shows that racist attitudes toward immigrants are sometimes cloaked in a pretense of concern over economic issues such as unemployment and minimum wages. For example, Creese (1988-1989) found that organized labor's resistance to Chinese immigrants in the late 19th century was grounded primarily in racist attitudes rather than the often-claimed fear of job loss. Although the extent to which racism underlies negative reactions toward immigrants today is not totally clear, other research suggests that there is a strong relationship between op-

position to immigration and negative opinions about Canada's policy of multiculturalism (Sorensen, 1993).² Consequently, the spectrum of theoretical explanations for intergroup relations is an appropriate base from which attitudes toward immigrants can be explored.

This study examines two theories that dominate the literature on intergroup relations. The first proposes that exposure to higher education leads to more liberal attitudes toward immigrants and visible minority groups. This theory has been further elaborated by distinguishing between the positive effects of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities on the one hand and the negative impact of the natural sciences, engineering, and business programs on the other. Alternatively, realistic group conflict theory states that increased competition over scarce resources results in greater intergroup conflict and lower levels of acceptance of the "out group," or in this case the immigrant population.³

Earlier research on intergroup relations indicates that education has a positive effect on attitudes toward racial minorities (Curtis & Lambert, 1976; ECC, 1991a, 1991b). Similar findings are observed in studies of public attitudes toward immigration. For example, Gallup Poll (1994) results show that better educated Canadians are less likely to call for a reduction in immigration levels. And exit surveys of university graduates reveal self-reports of increased appreciation of other races, cultures, and religions (University of Alberta, 1993). Such findings support the hypothesis that education reduces prejudice toward other racial and ethnic groups as well as immigrants. Formal education may influence attitudes via the content of the curriculum (exposure to information about other societies and ethnic/racial groups as well as to liberal philosophies) as well as through the culture of secondary and postsecondary institutions (contact with students and instructors from other ethnic and racial groups).

It has also been argued that type of education influences attitudes. Guimond, Palmer, and Begin (1989) argue that students cannot be treated as a homogeneous group. Rather, distinctions between disciplines must be articulated. These researchers found that in the province of Quebec social science students appeared to be more accepting of immigrants than were business or natural science students. Guimond et al.'s model was intended to test the *selective recruitment* hypothesis that social science and humanities programs are more likely to attract individuals who are already more accepting of immigrants. But because their study had a cross-sectional (single point-in-time) design, the possibility of individual attitude change over time was not directly addressed. In other words, the model did not adequately distinguish between the real effects of type and level of acquired education on attitudes toward immigrants and differences between individuals that were present prior to their educational experiences.⁴

A second theory, realistic group conflict theory (or scarce resources theory), explains that negative attitudes toward visible minorities arise from competition over scarce resources. Individuals with the least economic security are most likely to be hostile to the out group, whereas those with more economic security will hold more liberal attitudes (Levine & Campbell, 1972). A recent ECC (1991a) study summarizing 62 public opinion polls between 1975 and

1990 found a negative relationship between aggregate unemployment rates and favorable attitudes toward immigrants. Gallup Poll (1994) results covering the period 1975 to 1993 reveal a similar pattern, namely, more opposition to immigration during periods of high unemployment.

Although these studies have a longitudinal dimension, they are still only trend analyses comprising a sequence of cross-sectional surveys. Hence the results do not provide a strong test of the realistic group conflict hypothesis. Although both studies examined unemployment rates and attitudes toward immigrants over time, they could not conclusively demonstrate attitude change because each year's results came from a different sample. Consequently, it is difficult to determine if the apparent effects of changes in unemployment rates on attitudes are real or if we require other explanations. Furthermore, the use of an aggregate measure of unemployment at best only indirectly tests the hypothesis, because we can never be certain that those individuals who were unemployed (or whose family members had experienced unemployment) were also those holding the least favorable attitudes toward immigrants.

To establish more definitively the relative utility of each theory it is necessary to use a research design that can better account for individual attitude changes and causal ordering. Panel studies that resurvey the same individuals at two or more time points provide an opportunity to observe directly individual changes over time (Lieberson, 1987). Furthermore, if the same participants are interviewed several times, the effects of selective recruitment can be controlled and causal ordering can be more firmly established. Hence this study uses panel data to test the educational exposure and realistic group conflict theories. Specifically, our research was designed to answer the question of whether level and type of education and economic security positively affect attitudes toward immigrants.

Obviously both theories could be useful explanations of attitudes toward immigrants. In other words, both acquired education and difficult labor market experiences could influence one's beliefs (positively and negatively respectively). Furthermore, the combination of low education and considerable personal labor market difficulty might generate even greater negative reactions toward immigrants. Hence in our multivariate analysis we also examine interaction effects.

Research Design and Sampling

We employed a multivariate statistical analysis of panel data from a study of Edmonton high school graduates. These data were extracted from a larger data set containing information collected from high school and university graduates in three Canadian cities (Krahn & Mosher, 1992). We used data from only the Edmonton component of the survey because the graduates in the other two cities (Toronto and Sudbury) were not followed for the full seven-year period (1985-1992) covered in Edmonton. We excluded the university graduates from our analysis because, unlike the high school graduates who were followed out of high school and into postsecondary education, we could not examine their attitudes prior to university entrance. The high school graduates in turn comprise a particularly useful sample for a study of the effects of education on attitudes, because we can compare their attitudes before and after acquiring

postsecondary education. Furthermore, this age cohort might be most likely to be influenced by education.

The Edmonton high school seniors were first surveyed in their classrooms in May 1985, just before their graduation from high school. This baseline survey was followed by mail surveys in 1986, 1987, 1989, and 1992. Six high schools (and 66 classes in them) were initially selected on a nonrandom basis but with an effort to generate final sampling units (students) from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and with a mix of vocational and academic characteristics. All students were given the choice to participate, and those younger than 18 at the time of the original survey were required to obtain their parents' written consent to participate in the study. The baseline sample contained 983 students. In each follow-up survey those individuals who had not completed the previous questionnaire were dropped from the sample, resulting in a final sample of 404 individuals (56% female).⁵ The average age (in 1992) of these individuals was 25.

An analysis of the effects of attrition, a potential source of bias in any panel study, revealed that females, more academically oriented respondents, and those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds were significantly more likely still to be participating in the study in 1989 (Krahn & Mosher, 1992). The latter variable is of particular consequence to this study. If, as these attrition tests suggest, respondents from a higher socioeconomic background are over-represented in our final sample, the generalizability of our test of realistic group conflict may be somewhat limited. Although similar attrition tests have not been conducted on the 1992 sample, there is little reason to believe that the pattern of attrition changed after 1989. The tendency for female, academically oriented students and those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds to remain in the study probably continued through to 1992. Accordingly, these sampling biases must be taken into consideration in the interpretation of our results.

Measurement

This study was designed to examine the relationship between attitudes toward immigrants and two key independent variables, educational experience and economic security. The dependent variable was measured with responses to the statement: "Too many immigrants have been getting jobs in Canada." Sample members were asked to answer on a five-point scale with responses ranging from 1 *strongly disagree* to 5 *strongly agree*. Answers provided in 1992 form our dependent variable, whereas answers to the same question in 1985 constitute a control variable in our analysis.⁶ Thus our dependent variable is really a measure of change in attitudes toward immigrants over the previous seven years.

It is important to reemphasize that such an indicator of attitudes toward immigrants may, as we imply above, encompass negative racial or ethnic orientations. Although the statement makes no mention of racial or ethnic minorities, focusing only on immigrants and jobs, one might respond negatively to this question by drawing on attitudes of racial or ethnic prejudice. Although further research on the exact composition of attitudinal clusters would be useful, there is good reason to believe that for many Canadians the term *immigrant* conjures up images of a member of a visible minority. Consequently,

the results of our analysis will also have implications for generalizations about attitudes toward ethnic and racial minorities.

To test for the predicted liberalizing effects of higher education we included the number of years of full-time education acquired over the seven-year period in the regression analysis. Those respondents who did not attend a postsecondary institution full time during this period received a value of zero for this variable. We tested for differential effects of type of education with a subsample of respondents who had attended university full time for at least one year. A dichotomous variable indicating the type of university program (1 = social science, humanities, and fine arts; 0 = science, engineering, business, and other programs) was used to determine whether Guimond et al.'s (1989) Quebec findings are also applicable to university students in Edmonton.⁷

Three measures of economic security were used. First, a cumulative measure of total months of unemployment over the course of the entire study became our key measure of economic security. A second variable measuring underemployment indicated whether respondents had been working part time while wanting a full-time job (involuntary part-time work) at any time between 1989 and 1992. Respondents' self-assessment of their future economic position was used as a third, more subjective indicator of economic security. This measure was based on responses to the statement "Looking ahead, do you think that a year from now you will be better off (2), worse off (0), or just about the same as now (1)?"

Control variables included sex, household income, and whether one or both of the respondent's parents was a member of a visible minority group. Sex was included in the model because the research literature reveals an inconsistent pattern of relationships between attitudes toward immigrants and sex (ECC, 1991a). Although household income is in part a measure of economic security and is thus related to the scarce resources hypothesis, it was only measured in 1992 and so is merely treated as a control variable in our analysis. Visible minority status (of parents) was included as a control variable because members of minority groups would presumably hold more positive attitudes toward immigrants.

Model and Hypotheses

Our analysis was conducted in three stages. We began by examining descriptive statistics showing changes in attitudes over time. Then, using ordinary least-squares regression (OLS), we regressed our dependent variable, attitudes toward immigrants, on the educational attainment and economic security variables. Following the literature we hypothesized that exposure to postsecondary education and higher levels of economic security would have a liberalizing effect on attitudes toward immigrants. Specifically, the greater the number of years of postsecondary attendance, the greater was the likelihood that the respondent would express favorable attitudes toward immigrants. And in accordance with realistic group conflict theory, we predicted that the greater the number of months of unemployment over the seven-year period, the more likely it was that negative attitudes toward immigrants would be expressed. Also, we hypothesized that those individuals working part time involuntarily, and those who believed that their economic position would decline in the future, would hold more negative attitudes toward immigrants.

Finally, we tested for the possibility of two-way interaction effects involving educational attainment and economic security measures, predicting that those individuals who had not pursued further education and who had the least economic security would express the least positive attitudes toward immigrants.

In the third stage of our analysis we attempted to replicate Guimond et al.'s (1989) research that differentiated between types of postsecondary education. In this model only those respondents who had attended university for at least one full year were selected. We predicted that students completing programs in the social sciences and humanities, in contrast to business, engineering, and the natural sciences, would have more positive attitudes about immigrants.

Results

Table 1 presents preliminary descriptive results for the complete sample showing changes in attitudes toward immigrants between 1985 and 1992. We observe little change in attitudes over time. The slight decline (1.8%) in respondents reporting positive attitudes may reflect that fact that immigration was a much more prominent public issue in 1992 when, compared with 1985, almost three times as many immigrants arrived in Canada (Badets, 1993).

Table 2 compares subsamples of respondents who had or had not completed some postsecondary education over the seven-year period. The findings suggest that those who had been exposed to at least one year of postsecondary education were somewhat more likely to express positive attitudes in 1992, compared with their responses to the same question seven years earlier. Alternatively, Table 2 reveals a declining level of acceptance of immigrants over time for those who had not gone on to postsecondary education. Thus the relationship between education and attitudes toward immigrants appears to be symmetrical; postsecondary education has a positive effect on attitudes, whereas the absence of such education leads to more negative attitudes. However, we cannot draw final conclusions about the effects of education at this point because those who did not obtain further education might also have experienced more labor market difficulties. Hence multivariate analysis is required.

Nevertheless, the pattern of results in Table 2 has an important implication for the interpretation of our multivariate analyses. Those who went on to higher education were already expressing more positive attitudes toward immigrants prior to their exposure to postsecondary education. In 1985 more than

Table 1
Attitudes Toward Immigrants by Time Period

	1985 (%)	1992 (%)	Change (%)
Positive	39.9	38.1	-1.8
Neutral*	28.8	30.8	2.0
Negative	31.3	31.1	-0.2
Total (N=397)	100.0	100.0	

*A score of 3 on the 1-5 scale.

Table 2
Attitudes Toward Immigrants by Time Period and Education

	<i>Postsecondary Education</i>					
	<i>1985</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Yes</i> <i>1992</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Change</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>1985</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>No</i> <i>1992</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Change</i> <i>(%)</i>
Positive	43.2	44.9	1.7	24.8	19.7	-5.1
Neutral*	27.5	31.7	4.2	31.4	29.5	-1.9
Negative	29.3	23.4	-5.9	43.8	50.8	7.0
Total	100.0 (N=276)	100.0		100.0 (N=121)	100.0	

*A score of 3 on the 1-5 scale.

four out of 10 members of this subsample (43.2%) responded favorably to the question about immigrants, compared with only 24.8% of those who did not go on to complete further education. Thus there is evidence of considerable recruitment selectivity bias in the data (young people with more positive attitudes toward immigrants are more likely to go on to higher education), accenting the importance of controlling for baseline (1985) values of our dependent variable (immigration attitudes) in the multivariate regression analysis of attitudes in 1992.

Table 3 cross-tabulates the percentage of respondents agreeing or disagreeing (in 1992) with the statement that “too many immigrants are getting jobs” by

Table 3
Attitudes Toward Immigrants by Number of Months Unemployed, Predicted Economic Future, and Underemployment by Education

	<i>Postsecondary Education</i>							
	<i>Yes (N= 277)</i>				<i>No (N= 122)</i>			
	<i>Pos.</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Neut.</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Neg.</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Total</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Pos.</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Neut.*</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Neg.</i> <i>(%)</i>	<i>Total</i> <i>(%)</i>
<i>Total Months Unemployed</i>								
0	41.3	26.1	32.6	100.0	16.2	37.8	50.0	100.0
1-6	45.0	38.7	16.3	100.0	16.7	27.8	55.5	100.0
7-12	52.3	25.0	22.7	100.0	30.4	13.0	56.6	100.0
>1 year	45.1	32.3	22.6	100.0	19.2	34.6	46.2	100.0
<i>Predicted Economic Future</i>								
Better	44.2	30.5	25.3	100.0	18.8	31.9	49.3	100.0
Same	42.3	33.0	24.7	100.0	20.4	28.6	51.0	100.0
Worse	41.7	33.3	25.0	100.0	-	-	-	-
<i>Underemployment (PT, but wanted full-time job)</i>								
Yes	48.8	33.3	17.9	100.0	35.3	23.5	41.2	100.0
No (or n/a)	43.2	31.2	25.6	100.0	17.1	30.5	52.4	100.0

*A score of 3 on the 1-5 scale.

the three measures of economic security and by educational group. For all three economic security measures (unemployment, predicted economic future, underemployment), we fail to find any strong or consistent relationships with immigration attitudes in the predicted direction. In fact the patterns observed show more positive attitudes among those experiencing more labor market difficulties. For example, there is a tendency for respondents to hold more positive attitudes as unemployment increases in both educational groups. Similarly, those respondents reporting a period of involuntary part-time work were more positive in their attitudes toward immigrants. These results suggest, then, that the realistic group conflict (scarce resources) theory is not supported. However, as with the tests of the effects of postsecondary education, multivariate analyses are required for a more definitive answer.

The overall regression results for the first multivariate model (Table 4) are statistically significant; the model accounts for 29% of the variation in (1992) attitudes toward immigrants. It is apparent that most of this explained variance is a function of the baseline attitudes measure (beta = .364).⁸ On average, sample members who were more positive (or negative) in their attitudes toward immigrants when first surveyed in 1985 remained so in 1992.

The strong impact of the baseline control variable must be noted when interpreting the effects of the theoretically more important independent variables. Thus the somewhat smaller but statistically significant coefficient for years of education (beta = .237) is an important finding given that the effect of attitudes in 1985 are already taken into account. In other words, although high school graduates who are more positive toward immigrants are also more likely to pursue postsecondary education, participation in postsecondary education itself leads to more positive attitudes toward immigrants.⁹ Conversely, none of the economic security variables appears to be an important predictor of attitudes toward immigrants, controlling on baseline attitudes, postsecondary education, and other control variables. Sex and income, two of these control variables, also do not have significant net effects on attitudes. Visible minority

Table 4
Attitudes Toward Immigrants: Model One Regression Results

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Standardized Regression Coefficients</i>
Attitudes in 1985	0.364**
Postsecondary education (years)	0.237**
Months unemployed (1985-1992)	0.005
Predicted future finances (better=2)	0.060
Underemployment (yes=1)	0.054
Visible minority origins (yes=1)	0.125*
Sex (female=1)	-0.026
Household income	-0.059
	R ² =0.29** (N=335)

**p*<.01
***p*<.001

origins, however, have a significant effect of moderate size ($\beta = .125$) as one would expect.

To test for possible interaction effects involving education and economic security, the sample was split into two groups on the basis of educational attainment (some/no postsecondary education). A separate regression analysis using all the variables examined in Table 4 except years of education was then conducted for each subsample (Table 5). By comparing the coefficients for a specific variable (e.g., involuntary part-time employment) in the two equations, we could determine whether its impact differed depending on whether an individual had pursued postsecondary education.¹⁰ As in the total sample equation, none of the economic security measures in either equation had significant effects on the dependent variable. Tests of the differences between coefficients for each of the three economic security measures revealed no significant differences. Hence we fail to find evidence of an interaction effect between education and economic security on attitudes toward immigrants.

However, the somewhat stronger coefficient for the baseline attitudes measure in the postsecondary group ($\beta = .406$ compared with $.280$ for those with no further education) indicates that the former were more consistent in their attitudes over time. One interpretation of this difference suggests an extension of the original educational exposure theory. It may be that in times when the public is becoming less accepting of immigration higher education acts not so much to change attitudes, but to buffer them from shifts in public opinion in general. This argument would fit with the pattern of results in Table 2, which showed a small positive change for those who had continued their education but a larger negative change for those who had not.

Table 6 introduces our second model testing whether the type of program chosen by university students has an impact on attitudes toward immigrants. This comparison of the 1985 and 1992 attitudes of social science/humanities

Table 5
Education and Economic Security: Interaction Effects

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Postsecondary Education</i>	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Unstandardized regression coefficients</i>		
Attitudes in 1985	0.406***	0.280**
Months unemployed (1985-1992)	0.003	-0.007
Predicted future finances	0.044	0.360
Underemployment	0.057	0.294
Visible minority origins	0.353*	1.152*
Sex	-0.073	-0.055
Household Income	0.000	0.000
	$R^2 = 0.215^{***}$	0.230***
	(N=335)	

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 6
Attitudes Toward Immigrants by Time Period and University Program

	<i>Soc. Science/Humanities</i>			<i>Science/Eng./Business</i>		
	<i>1985</i> (%)	<i>1992</i> (%)	<i>Change</i> (%)	<i>1985</i> (%)	<i>1992</i> (%)	<i>Change</i> (%)
Positive	49.5	52.5	3.0	42.6	47.3	4.7
Neutral*	23.8	29.3	5.5	28.7	32.3	3.6
Negative	26.8	18.1	-8.7	28.7	20.4	-8.3
Total	100.0 (N=57)	100.0		100.0 (N=138)	100.0	

*A score of 3 on the 1-5 scale.

and science/engineering/business students again reveals evidence of a selectivity bias, albeit not as large a bias as we observed when comparing sample members who had continued their education with those who had left after grade 12 (see Table 2). Social science and humanities students already expressed more favorable attitudes toward immigrants in 1985 prior to beginning their postsecondary programs (49.5% had positive attitudes compared with 42.6% of the other subgroup). Thus, once again, these differences accent the importance of controlling for attitudes prior to educational exposure in multivariate analyses.

As for the hypothesized differential program effects, Table 6 shows that both types of program lead to more positive attitudes toward immigrants. In fact, contrary to our prediction, exposure to postsecondary education has a slightly stronger positive effect on the attitudes of science, engineering, and

Table 7
Attitudes Toward Immigrants: Model Two Regression Results

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Standardized Regression Coefficients</i>
Attitudes in 1985	0.340**
Program (Social Science/Humanities=1)	-0.076
Postsecondary education (years)	0.088
Months unemployed (1985-1992)	-0.017
Predicted future finances	0.029
Underemployment	0.068
Visible Minority origins	0.144*
Sex	-0.127
Household Income	-0.100
	R ² = 0.247** (N=164)

* $p < .05$

** $p < .001$

business students compared with social science and humanities students. However, because this difference is not large, we merely conclude that type of university program does not make a difference. Our multiple regression test of this second model (Table 7) reinforces this conclusion, because the (negative) parameter estimate for the program variable is weak and nonsignificant. Thus, in contrast to earlier research, we find no evidence that the type of postsecondary program differentially affects attitudes toward immigrants.

Conclusion

This research was designed to test two possible explanations for why people hold positive or negative attitudes toward immigrants. Although prior research provides evidence for both the educational exposure and realistic group conflict theories, the research designs employed in these previous studies limit the extent to which causal relationships can be determined.

Some of these studies have relied on cross-sectional data that cannot directly measure changes in individuals' attitudes. Rather, changes are inferred from attitudinal differences observed between individuals with different characteristics (Menard, 1991). For example, the liberalizing effects of education on attitudes are inferred from evidence that individuals with more education have more positive attitudes. However, it remains possible that people who pursue higher education already have more positive attitudes. Hence it is virtually impossible to tell whether significant differences are a result of event exposure (in this case to higher education) or if they are a function of prior selectivity. The Guimond et al. (1989) study of the effects of different types of postsecondary education is an example of this problem. Their finding that education, and specifically exposure to the social sciences and humanities, leads to more accepting other-group attitudes may simply indicate that individuals who participated in these programs were already more likely to express favorable attitudes toward immigrants before beginning their education.

Other studies have used trend analyses to demonstrate, for example, that a population's attitudes toward immigrants are less positive on average during times of high unemployment (ECC, 1991a). Once again, conclusions about changes in individuals' attitudes must be inferred from evidence of aggregate differences. However, panel data allow researchers to demonstrate more conclusively the effects of different types of experiences (e.g., education, labor market difficulties) on attitude change and to identify causal relationships (Menard, 1991; Menard & Elliot, 1990).

Our multivariate research using panel data reveals that young people who go on to higher education already express more positive attitudes toward immigrants before acquiring this additional education. Exposure to postsecondary education has a further liberalizing effect on attitudes. However, our data suggest that on average young people who did not continue their education became somewhat less accepting of immigrants between 1985 and 1992.

Continuing our summary of results, we fail to confirm the earlier finding that differences in university program are related to variations in attitudes toward immigrants (Guimond et al., 1989). We do, however, observe a small selectivity bias; social science and humanities graduates were somewhat more liberal in their attitudes when they began their program. It may be that a

similar selectivity bias also existed in previous cross-sectional studies that led to conclusions of differential program effects.

We did not find evidence of attitudes becoming more negative among those young people who reported more unemployment, underemployment, or uncertain economic futures. Nor did we observe an interaction effect between education and a scarcity of resources; the combination of low education and labor market difficulties was not associated with the least positive attitudes. However, these findings do not necessarily refute realistic group conflict theory. Our study examined the attitudes of young people, a cohort most likely to be influenced by postsecondary education. Alternatively, older labor force participants might be more likely to react negatively toward immigrants as a result of difficult labor market experiences. Thus a more age-representative sample would presumably provide a better test of the scarce resources hypothesis.

Although we are confident that compared with previous research our panel analysis provides a much more definitive test of educational exposure theory and a useful test of the applicability of realistic group conflict theory to young people, we acknowledge several other shortcomings. First, we were only able to use one measure of attitudes toward immigrants. Multiple indicators addressing different beliefs about immigrants would provide us with a more complete picture. In addition, attrition tests indicated that our final (1992) sample contained an overrepresentation of individuals from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. Hence the nonsignificant results in our test of the scarce resources hypothesis may have resulted from the underrepresentation of sample members with truly limited resources.

Summing up the results of our test of two theories regarding attitudes toward immigrants, we have found support only for the educational exposure explanation. As we introduced it, this theory suggests that both the curriculum (course content) and culture (contact with students and instructors from visible minority groups) of postsecondary education institutions may lead to more positive attitudes toward immigrants. Although we were unable to directly compare the utility of these two explanations, the observed absence of program differences might be taken to indicate that curriculum content is unimportant. However, we believe that such a conclusion would be inappropriate. It is possible, for example, that positive attitude change for social science and humanities students is primarily a result of curriculum content, whereas in contrast more accepting attitudes are generated among science, engineering, and business students mainly through contact with foreign students and members of visible minority groups. Further research on this topic is clearly needed.

Several of our findings also suggest an extension of educational exposure theory. We observed reduced acceptance of immigrants among young people who did not go on to higher education. In addition, the baseline attitude coefficient for the group exposed to postsecondary education was considerably larger, suggesting greater stability in attitudes over time for this subsample. Hence educational exposure theory might be usefully extended to predict that postsecondary education serves as a buffer against shifting public opinion. Perhaps in times when public opinion regarding immigrants is becoming less accepting young people who continue their education are less likely to be

influenced by negative opinions expressed by politicians, the news media, and the public at large. Greater access to information, exposure to alternative opinions, and more contact with members of visible minority groups may together act to maintain as well as encourage more accepting attitudes toward immigrants. Alternatively, young people who do not have the opportunity to participate in postsecondary education may be more easily influenced by shifts in public opinion.

In our introduction we note the growing number of immigrants arriving in Canada between 1985 and 1992, the majority coming from nontraditional source countries. At the same time, immigration has become a controversial political issue, as indicated by the conservative position of the Reform Party on immigration levels, the tightening of immigration policy by the governing Liberals, and the critical media scrutiny of the implementation of immigration policy. Public opinion has clearly shifted; negative attitudes toward immigrants have become more widespread. In this context our extension of educational exposure theory is not merely an academic exercise. It is also highly relevant to current policy debates about the value of postsecondary education. Canadian colleges and universities are frequently criticized for not being sufficiently practical, for not placing enough emphasis on job-relevant skills and training. Although the economic benefits of postsecondary education obviously require examination, we should also not lose sight of the social benefits. Ranking high among such social benefits is the encouragement of positive attitudes toward minority groups.

We conclude with three suggestions for further research. First, as Canada continues to admit large numbers of immigrants, the monitoring of attitudes and behavior toward immigrants, and toward racial and ethnic minorities, should remain high on the research agenda. Although instances of racial and ethnic conflict have not been as common in Canada as elsewhere, there is nevertheless evidence of racial discrimination (Reitz, 1988). The decision only a few years ago by some branches of the Canadian Legion to exclude members of a visible minority because of religious customs is only one example.

Second, given the evidence that postsecondary educational exposure positively affects attitudes toward immigrants, additional research on the specific mechanisms of such attitude change would be useful. Although the research literature contains discussions of curriculum and teaching methods designed to reduce prejudice among primary and secondary school students (McDougall, 1985; Mansfield & Kehoe, 1994), there has been little research on the same subject in postsecondary institutions. As we suggest several times above, such research should focus both on the content and the culture of postsecondary education, because attitude change may result both from exposure to information and ideas and from contact with members of visible minority and other out groups.¹¹

Finally, further research on the family, (elementary and high) school, and community factors that influence attitudes toward immigrants and members of visible minority groups might answer several specific questions raised by this study. Our finding of a strong selectivity bias forces us to ask why it is that high school students with more positive attitudes toward immigrants are also more likely to continue their education. Do parents who promote the impor-

tance of higher education also teach their children to be more accepting of immigrants and minority groups? Are schools that encourage students to go on to postsecondary education also more likely to emphasize the value of ethnic and racial diversity? Such patterns would suggest an underlying social class factor that needs to be further explored. Our findings also point to a second unanswered question, namely, how it is that young people who do not continue their education come to express less accepting attitudes toward immigrants? Additional research on the family, community, and workplace factors that precipitate this negative process would clearly be useful.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this article was presented at the 1994 Annual Meetings of the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association.
2. Results from the 1991 *Alberta Survey* (a random-sample telephone survey of Alberta adults conducted annually by the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta) suggest that people who are in favor of reducing immigration levels also tend to oppose Canada's multiculturalism policy (Sorensen, 1993). The data also reveal that rural residents of the province and those with less education are more likely to hold unfavorable attitudes on both issues.
3. A third theory emphasizes the *contact hypothesis*, which states that greater contact between groups dispels stereotyping through increased familiarity and thus leads to more positive intergroup attitudes (Amin, 1969; ECC, 1991a, 1991b; Kalin & Berry, 1982). Unfortunately, our data set does not contain measures of the extent and type of intergroup contact experienced by respondents. However, as we note in the body of the article, one of the possible explanations underlying the educational exposure hypothesis is that contact with members of diverse minority groups might be more frequent in postsecondary institutions.
4. In contrast to Guimond et al. (1989), Baer and Lambert (1990) found that exposure to the social sciences does not have a liberalizing effect on attitudes. However, Baer and Lambert did not examine attitudes toward immigrants or visible minorities. Rather, they focused on other issues such as the power and role in society of the military, unions, and large corporations. Thus, although their study has some bearing on debates about the liberalizing effects of education, it does not speak directly to the question of attitudes toward immigrants.
5. Sample sizes in the various analyses reported below are somewhat lower than 404 because of missing data on various indicators.
6. Responses to this question in 1985 and 1992 were reflected so that higher values indicate greater acceptance of immigrants.
7. A minority of the Edmonton high school graduates who continued their education left the city, but the majority enrolled at the University of Alberta.
8. By itself the baseline (1985) attitudinal variable accounted for almost 17% of the variation in attitudes in 1992. Cumulative missing data in the multiple regression equation with eight independent variables led to a smaller sample size of 335.
9. Although our sample is too small to allow confident conclusions, it appears that the relationship between education and attitudes may be curvilinear. Additional analyses (results not shown) indicate a somewhat larger positive change in attitudes between 1985 to 1992 for those with more than three years of postsecondary education. This might indicate that upper-year and graduate study courses have a larger impact on attitudes. Alternatively, the difference may simply indicate that (positive) attitude change is more likely among those who attend university (with four-year programs) compared with colleges and trade schools (with shorter programs).
10. Instead of adding cross-product terms to the regression equation to test for possible interaction effects, we split the sample into two groups (on the basis of education) to avoid problems of multicollinearity between cross-product terms and their component variables.
11. As one reviewer of this paper suggested, the nature of contact between majority and minority student groups in postsecondary institutions requires more careful scrutiny. Perhaps the positive attitudes that appear to result from such contact are a function of the fact that the

visible minority students who do go on to higher education share a common (advantaged) class background, and hence common values and behaviors, with the in group.

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When Principle Meets Practice: Teachers' Contradictory Responses to Antiracist Education

At a time of increasing racial and ethnocultural diversity in Canadian schools, many teachers are reluctant to implement antiracist education. This article draws on qualitative and quantitative data collected as part of a larger study of teachers, school administrators, and antiracist education policy advisors in five urban school boards across Canada. Findings indicate that teachers' negative responses to antiracist education are based on (a) their commitment to traditional pedagogic concerns, (b) conservative political views, and (c) conservative views on race and antiracism. Despite commonly expressed support for antiracist education, tensions and contradictions are inherent in the widespread reluctance to integrate antiracist educational approaches in classroom practice.

Beaucoup d'enseignant(e)s hésitent à s'engager dans l'éducation antiraciste en ces temps de diversités raciales et ethnoculturelles croissantes dans les écoles canadiennes. Cet article s'inspire des données qualitatives et quantitatives recueillies à partir d'une plus grande étude faite auprès d'enseignant(e)s, d'administrateurs et d'administratrices d'écoles, et de conseillers en politique d'éducation antiraciste de cinq commissions scolaires à travers le Canada. Les résultats indiquent que les réactions négatives des enseignant(e)s vis-à-vis l'éducation antiraciste sont basées sur (a) leur engagement aux questions pédagogiques traditionnelles, (b) les opinions politiques conservatrices, et (c) les opinions conservatrices sur l'antiracisme et les sujets raciaux. Malgré le support communément exprimé en faveur de l'éducation antiraciste, la tension et les contradictions sont inhérentes à l'hésitation globale d'intégrer les approches éducatives antiracistes en salle de classe.

Racial and ethnocultural diversity accelerated by the post-World War II migration of peoples of African, Asian, and Central and South American descent has become an undeniable reality in Canadian society (Fleras & Elliott, 1992). Demographic projections indicate that by the turn of the century racial and ethnocultural minorities will rise to almost half the population in some urban centers (Samuel, 1992). The concurrent increase of children who are diverse in race and ethnicity, religion, language, political orientation, and social class is expected to present a great challenge to the school system.

In response to this situation, political pressure from constituents and interest groups has often succeeded in persuading state and local school jurisdictions to develop and implement educational policies that explicitly address the

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realities of cultural diversity in the schools, specifically the problem of educational equity for all members. In Ontario, for instance, the provincial government amended the Education Act in 1992 making it mandatory for all school boards in its jurisdiction to develop and implement an antiracism and ethnocultural equity policy (Ministry of Education and Training, 1992). The tendency in such policy statements to conflate antiracist and multicultural education departs from most British and emergent Canadian models that conceptualize these as two distinct innovations with different pedagogical and political objectives. For example, Troyna (1987, 1993) argues for a clear distinction between multicultural and antiracist education due to their divergent origins, goals, and transformative potential.

Although multicultural education originated in institutional structures and attempts to integrate diverse cultural norms, values, and traditions into the mainstream curriculum, antiracist education is a sociopolitical as well as a pedagogical movement that arose from the voices of oppressed and marginalized groups. They advocate for a pedagogy that would transform individual behaviors, attitudes, institutional policies, and practices that reinforce and perpetuate racism. Referring to Mullard (1984), Troyna (1993) concludes:

Antiracism assumes a periscopic stance in that it seeks to make "a connection between institutional discrimination and inequality of race, class and gender." Multiculturalism in contrast, is microscopic, focusing narrowly and intently on issues relating to culture, especially within ethnic minority communities. (p. 133)

The development of equity policies notwithstanding, a review of the impact of such educational innovations in British, American, and Canadian schools reveals marginal support for them. More obvious is the substantial resistance with which the reforms are greeted (Mansfield & Kehoe, 1994; Mock & Masemann, 1990; Palmer 1986; Sleeter, 1992; Troyna & Williams, 1986). Because there is some question as to how educators take up antiracism as an educational reform, it is necessary to query the teachers and administrators who are charged with its implementation. This study focuses on the personal and professional perspectives of teachers to ascertain how to account for the variability of responses to antiracist education, especially with respect to a complex and contradictory resistance.

Teacher resistance to innovation and change has received notice in the sociology of education literature. Acker (1988) argues that teachers' resistance to new initiatives, especially those concerning equity, may be the result of a number of factors. The nature of the initiative itself may be perceived to impose on, threaten, or counteract other programs. The conditions of work encompassing the micropolitics of the school, the general level of support for educational reform found in the overall climate in the school, and the nature of teachers' expanding role may influence reluctance to change. Characteristics of teachers such as their age, race and ethnicity, social class, and degree of conservatism may also influence receptivity to reform. Finally, teachers' ideologies, norms, values, traditions, beliefs, and assumptions may influence their positions, attitudes, and behaviors toward any initiative that disturbs traditional approaches. According to Corbett, Firestone, and Rossman (1987), the likelihood of a positive or negative response to change depends on the fit between the proposed change and the culture of the school: "change is greeted with suspi-

cion and reluctance when expectations for behavior embedded in a new practice, policy or program do not coincide with existing conceptions of the way school life is or should be" (p. 36).

This study draws on, modifies, and reinterprets these theories of educators' responses, particularly resistance toward an educational reform such as antiracist education. Specifically, we propose that lack of support is contingent on teachers' interpretation of antiracist education, making suggestions about both the sources and the consequences of their conceptualizations. Meanings of antiracist education are not uniformly absorbed at the point of dispatch—in a professional activity session on the subject, for example—but are actively produced at the point of confrontation with an individual's interpretive and ideological framework. Teachers' subjectivities, including their values, assumptions, and personal investments, together with their social identities are essential in determining both their interpretation of antiracist education and their degree of willingness to work with this innovation. This inquiry exposes a veritable catalogue of negative responses to antiracist pedagogy that teachers utilize without a full appreciation of their significance in a racially diverse society. The mainstream educational community does not generally apprehend the links to the ideological and political strata from which teachers' perspectives are derived as the effects these perspectives have on students of a racial or ethnic minority.

Race, Racism, and Antiracist Education

In multiracial societies, the concept of race¹ has become increasingly problematic. Physical markers such as skin pigmentation, facial features, and other somatic characteristics seem to define visibly people's racial categories. Many contemporary social theorists, however, have rejected the theory that race exists as an objective fact. They have argued that race is a social construction. Pinar (1993) says, "It is hardly an unchanging, biological concept; race is a complex, dynamic, and changing construct" (p. 61). The categories that constitute references about race have economic and political (and educational) expedience, but no empirical basis. As Gillborn (1988) points out, the human race is a biological singularity. Such factors as social and economic exploitation, political disenfranchisement, and cultural and ideological repression (Jan-Mohamed & Lloyd, 1987) have produced different racial categories and definitions as well as different meanings of race that vary significantly over time and among different societies (McCarthy, 1990). Popularized meanings of race serve and reinforce the prevailing logic that guides structural and cultural realities and inequitable social arrangements. As Gates (1985) points out, the notion of fundamental and constitutive difference of otherness is a result of will.

Although it may be widely accepted by scholars that racism is the consequence of historically inequitable and exploitive social and economic relations, commonplace understandings of racism often get stuck in that historical quagmire ("Slavery gave rise to racism," "Racism underpinned the European destruction of Native populations"). Social analysts now describe the concepts of race and racism as dynamic ways of constructing meaning and interpreting the social order (Goldberg, 1990; Hall, 1980; Miles, 1989). Evolving definitions of racism reflect this transition in thought. Social psychological prejudice-based

theories have given way to theories that include the contexts in which racism is manifest (institutional racism, for example), the social construction of racialized categories that legitimize differential treatment and oppression, and the way racism is articulated through historical and social functions in society (Gilroy, 1987; Hall, 1981). The prevalent idea today is that race and racism are integral to our present ways of structuring meanings and everyday social interactions.

Discrimination against subordinate groups based on perceived attributes often functions to deny equitable participation in such institutional spheres as housing, education, justice, and political life. As institutions responsible for the maintenance and transmission of a society's traditions, values, and norms, schools have participated in the differential treatment of children; those with the attributes most valued by the institution are favored and benefit much more from schooling than those with other attributes (Bernstein, 1977; Curtis, Livingstone, & Smaller, 1992; Oakes, 1985). According to Foster (1990), the structural inequalities of education affect students of a racial or ethnic minority in several ways including the evaluation of their academic potential, the curriculum they receive, the social relationship they develop with teachers, and the career and life opportunities to which they are exposed.

Antiracist education is an innovation that directly addresses the issues of race and racism in schools and society at large. Educational jurisdictions in Britain, Canada, and to some extent the United States have developed policies and practices to help eradicate racist ideas and beliefs as well as individual and institutional practices that support and perpetuate racism in society. Thomas (1984) identifies the objectives of antiracist education as exploring the underlying causes and manifestations of racism; considering racism and difference as coextensive with resistance, struggle, and change; and supporting the effective transmission of school knowledge together with the experiences of children and their families. In addition, Troyna (1987) notes that antiracist education calls for collective action informed by a political analysis of the way that racism functions in society to exclude others. The project of an antiracist education, then, would be to examine social and structural factors that create and perpetuate racism in society and to analyze the ways racism is transmitted, reproduced, reworked, and resisted (Dei, 1993; Foster, 1990). Antiracist pedagogy is intended to be fully integrated into the curriculum rather than relegated to the status of an add-on or presented as a discrete curriculum unit.

Methodology

This article is drawn from a larger research project (Solomon & Levine-Rasky, 1994) conducted in the spring of 1993, which used both quantitative and qualitative approaches in the data collection process. School boards were selected for this study based on the presence of racial and ethnocultural diversity in their student population and the existence of a formal multicultural and/or antiracist education policy. On this basis, five urban centers were chosen from the provinces of British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia.

The survey, distributed only to teachers, contained three sections. The first elicited respondents' demographic and background characteristics such as sex, ethnicity, years of teaching experience, and school panel.² The second section

consisted of 55 statements, using a 5-point Likert response scale to ascertain teacher perspectives on various aspects of multicultural and antiracist education policy and practice. Survey items were divided into the following clusters pertaining to: goals; policy; teaching practices (classroom strategies); community relations; other school practices; specific beliefs about pedagogy; general beliefs about race, ethnicity, racism, and antiracism; beliefs about multicultural and antiracist education; professional development about diversity; and other related professional issues and personal evaluations. The third section of the survey solicited additional comments in an unstructured manner and asked volunteers for follow-up interviews.

For this multisite study, coinvestigators with research skills and knowledge of the local school environment were employed to distribute, conduct, and collect the survey; to do a preliminary analysis of the survey data; and to conduct the follow-up interviews. One thousand and two (1,002) surveys and 227 additional information sheets were completed by teachers in 57 elementary and secondary schools from the five selected school jurisdictions across Canada. Response rates varied from 80% in some schools to 10% in others and were dependent to a large degree on the nature of the researchers' access to teachers. Personal administration of the survey at staff meetings, for example, yielded a higher return rate than did distribution to teachers' mailboxes. The variation in localized response rates should not limit the generalizability of the findings in the regions studied.

Although the survey data provided broad and generalized patterns of teacher perspectives on multicultural and antiracist education, the follow-up interviews were designed to probe for more detail and for the meanings behind attitudes, beliefs, and practices. For the larger report three groups of educators were interviewed: 35 teachers who participated in the survey; 10 school administrators (principals and vice-principals); and six race and ethnocultural equity advisors employed by school boards. Purposive sampling ensured a balanced representation of sex, years of teaching experience, and grade level or subjects taught. One administrator from each participating school and the antiracist education advisor assigned to each of the five boards of education were interviewed. Although teachers were invited to volunteer for the interview, the other participants were solicited directly. Interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim for coding and analysis.

In this article analysis is restricted to (a) the sample of *teachers* studied, and (b) the responses to *antiracist* education exclusively, the conflation of multicultural and antiracist education in policy and curricula notwithstanding. For purposes of this discussion, responses to antiracist education were distinguished from those of multicultural education wherever possible as indicated by the wording of individual survey items, the interview protocol, and actual written or oral responses to these. Analysis of survey data was mainly descriptive, involving simple frequencies and cross-tabulations. The additional comments included on 22.7% of all questionnaires were coded and analyzed with interview data. Broad categories were generated to represent these data before reducing them to specific emergent themes.

The findings that follow are based on the analysis of both the survey and interview data, but are more firmly grounded in the interviews that probed for

the determinants and implications of the attitudes, beliefs, and practices that emerged from survey responses. This qualitative approach was emphasized because it allows a deeper and more complex exploration of participants' beliefs, which is necessary in an inquiry on a topic as emotionally charged and sensitive as race and education (Gillborn, 1995; Moodley, 1981; Troyna, 1993). Although utilizing data generated by both qualitative and quantitative means, this article theorizes the problem of resistance to antiracist education in a deliberately broad methodological framework. It thus avoids specific reference to respondents' sex, years of teaching experience, school jurisdiction, or cultural heritage. Our position should be regarded as a balance between offering meaningful explanations of teachers' aggregate responses to antiracist education and the significance of the lived experience of particular social actors. Rather than suggest a uniform process of data analysis, it thus engages the debate in educational research in which questions about the implications of subscribing to a particular approach are not answered as often as they are integrated, interpreted, and negotiated (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

Overview of Findings

Although the negative response to antiracist education is the focus of this article, our original report (Solomon & Levine-Rasky, 1994) devotes an entire section to narratives of *supportive* responses to antiracist education as well. Findings of this nature ranged from enacting selective and occasional practices in the classroom to posing explicit challenges to the status quo in a school. As encouraging and rich as these data are, however, responses that express resistance represent a larger proportion of our findings. For reasons of length constraints and cohesive argument, we constructed the current article around this salient phenomenon.

Findings indicate that although teachers vary widely in their individual philosophy, conceptualization, and practice of antiracist education, they generally interpret the innovation as a challenge to established teaching practices and beliefs about the function of education. Interpretations of antiracist education reflect an individualistic understanding and an uncertainty about its application, and therefore appear to be vague, fragmentary, and contradictory. For example, the survey data reveal that most teachers agree that the broad *goals* of antiracist education should be to change individual attitudes and behaviors and institutional policies and practices that reinforce and perpetuate racism (see Table 1). Contrasting these results with those from two other items reveals a drop in support of up to 26.9% for the *practice* of antiracist education.

How does one account for the drop in support as teachers move from principle to practice of antiracist education? We speculate that teachers as professionals support laudable educational goals in principle, but struggle against full implementation for a variety of reasons (Gillborn, 1995; Sleeter, 1992; Troyna, 1993).

Rather than draw direct causal relationships, our purpose here is to explore the subjective, ideological, and sociopolitical territory of teacher responses to antiracist education. This complex analytic space notwithstanding, we should also raise the question of social desirability as a legitimate call for more research. That is, how can the moment of social desirability be exploited in order to serve our greater purpose? Because mobilizing a socially desirable discourse

Table 1
Teacher Responses About Goals and Practices of Antiracist Education (ARE)
and to Resistance to ARE

Survey Item	Valid percent			n
	Agree	Disagree	Ambivalent	
The goal of antiracist education is to change individual behaviors and attitudes that reinforce racism.	90.6	3.6	5.8	988
The goal of antiracist education is to change institutional policies and practices that perpetuate racism.	85.9	4.3	9.8	984
Antiracist education should be integrated into all subjects.	63.7	15.8	20.6	981
I teach that racial and ethnic diversity in the classroom is desirable.	77.3	4.0	18.7	951
Resistance to multicultural and antiracist education policies is evident in my school.	21.1	47.7	31.2	966
Resistance to multicultural and antiracist education practices is evident in my school.	18.7	53.0	28.3	959

must obfuscate those insights that are more contradictory and undisciplined, we should press on and ask what it may contribute to that complex territory of teachers’ responses to antiracist education. One effect it does have is to place the largely negative substance of interview data in high relief. For whatever disparity is found in the survey data becomes even more apparent when reviewing the qualitative data. Follow-up interviews with survey respondents reveal contradictory and ambivalent interpretations of the goals of antiracist education and the ways in which they may be translated into classroom practices.

Comparison of data from the survey and the interviews frequently reveals contradiction and conflict. The incidence of contradiction provides the opportunity for further analysis of the tensions that teachers face when contemplating equity, race, racism, and antiracist education. One such tension is reflected in the observation that despite reports of positive beliefs about teaching with sensitivity to race and ethnocultural equity, there is some question about whether those espoused beliefs are enacted in practice.

Antiracist education as a principle enshrined in educational policy enjoys a good deal of support from teaching staff and school administration. Survey data indicate that a large percentage of teachers believe that, or express ambivalence about whether, there is resistance to race and ethnocultural education policy and practice in their school environment (see Table 1). However, when they are expected to put their principles into actual classroom practice, teachers begin to articulate obstacles. It is necessary to explore how lack of engagement with antiracist education is explained by teachers themselves and the shape it assumes in their attitudes and activities. This article focuses on three main findings: traditional pedagogic concerns; conservative political views; and conservative views on race and antiracism.

Traditional Pedagogic Concerns

For many teachers, antiracist education threatens the core principles of the educational enterprise—assimilation, group discipline and physical control, meritocracy, and individualism. Moreover, a number of teachers in our study express the view that antiracist education interferes with the traditional mandate of education, commonly interpreted as preparing students for postsecondary education or the world of work. “You need to learn the system, get a job; so you might as well learn to do it this [traditional] way.” As a result, some teachers are preoccupied with a traditional interpretation of curriculum content developed to achieve the educational outcomes favored by the dominant groups in Canadian society. In conforming to traditional curriculum guidelines, these teachers believe that the core curriculum does not lend itself to antiracist education or that the school program is too full to accommodate perceived marginal issues such as antiracism. The following statement represents these views:

Math, for example, is sort of a straightforward subject, you don’t really do it [make connections with antiracist education]. In geography, in history we have a curriculum to adhere to. And the curriculum in history is the American Revolution, the growth of Canada, Confederation. All the immigrants at those points were British, French, Scandinavian, German, so you know ... the curriculum is overcrowded as it is.

A particularly provocative quote is that “maths is maths whether you are teaching it to a black person or [anyone else]...there are no x’s and y’s in multicultural [and antiracist education].”

Others dismiss completely the pedagogical legitimacy of antiracist pedagogy as a curriculum innovation. One third of those who answered the survey item either agree that antiracist education (and multicultural education) is a passing trend or feel ambivalent about it (see Table 2). Here one teacher refers to the views of his colleagues:

I think the majority of staff probably find it a waste of time. Their reaction to it is negative ... It’s just sort of a red-neck attitude among teachers. I think that the teachers I know aren’t really racist, but they see it [antiracist education] as an artsy fartsy sort of thing to do. Their concern is to teach the 3 Rs.

On one survey item, half the teachers who responded believe that antiracist education (and multicultural education) is or may be inconsistent with the maintenance of classroom management (see Table 2). This tension is exacerbated when teachers’ curriculum focus is inextricably related to the preparation of students for standardized examinations that test for increasingly regulated learning outcomes. In the following interview excerpt, a teacher assesses the impact of policy dictates on their classroom practice:

We don’t have a choice anymore, [learning outcomes] are very, very specific. And there are going to be provincial tests on this thing, or even national [tests] they are talking about now. And it doesn’t matter what our standards are anymore, it’s the government standards.

Concern for “curricular overload” is another dimension of the material conditions of work for teachers that explains their lack of support for antiracist

Table 2
Teacher Responses and Traditional Pedagogic Concerns Regarding
Antiracist Education

Survey Item	Valid percent			n
	Agree	Disagree	Ambivalent	
Multicultural and antiracist education do not address the realities of school life such as classroom management.	21.2	49.3	29.5	975
Multicultural and antiracist education are just another fashionable curriculum initiative.	13.4	66.1	20.5	971

education. Teachers often interpret antiracist pedagogy as yet another curricular innovation they are expected to add to their already full programs, rather than as an orientation to the teaching and learning process that could inform their regular activities. In addition, it is often seen within the pedagogic framework known as the transmission model of instruction in which the teacher-as-authority transmits content to those without knowledge. If antiracist education is interpreted as requiring the acquisition of new knowledge, then teachers conclude they are being asked to master yet more material in their already full repertoires.

Many of the teachers who are resistant to antiracist education perceive no obvious short-term personal or professional benefits deriving from their implementation of antiracist education. “What am I going to get out of this?” asks one. Changing attitudes, practices, and structures that reinforce racism is too gradual a process with no guarantee of success. Here a teacher reflects on this dilemma:

You may not see the fruits of your efforts for 10 years, long after the kids are no longer a part of the classroom. So it is hard to take that long view; and it looks, for a lot of teachers, like nothing is happening ... no matter how hard I try there aren't going to be any results because I'm not going to see them.

This limited perspective on education leaves many teachers reluctant to invest in curricular forms and approaches where the benefits may not be immediate or measurable. When they are motivated to undertake an innovation like antiracist education, their commitment is often short term and superficial. For these teachers, as one equity advisor put it, equity and inclusion may go only as far as “putting posters up, changing the announcements, and waiting for the [antiracist education] phase to run out, so they can return to their traditional curriculum and pedagogy.” This is especially the case for what some teachers view as noncore areas of study that conflict with those teachers’ assumptions, interests, values, and beliefs about the purpose, content, and process of schooling.

Conservative Political Views

Many teachers strongly support and work toward the assimilation of racial and ethnic minorities into the dominant Canadian culture despite the country’s national policy on multiculturalism formulated 25 years ago. One teacher

insists, "This country was founded by Native Peoples and people of British North American descent. You can't ignore this fact because you are trying to be politically correct." From this ideological position these teachers perceive their jobs to be

to teach or orient new Canadians to the Canadian way or history or culture ... If we cater to multiculturalism we are doing our children a disservice ... We do have some traditions ... Let's celebrate some Canadianisms. We have gone a little too far with multicultural education.

The belief that racial and ethnocultural diversity is threatening to dominant norms is pervasive in the data. "At one time you understood what everyone was saying; now you don't always. There's a threat there." A large group of teachers perceive differences in language, religion, traditions, and customs, especially those of new immigrants, as a source of division. One consequence of this interpretive framework is a maintenance of Eurocentric classroom practices that discourage and devalue minority cultural forms, traditions, and experiences. The following quotation illustrates this point:

I know that the best products of musical expression are from Western European society from what I know right now. To me, the ethnic stuff that I have heard, and I haven't heard very much, seems to be a lot less sophisticated. And if they start bringing that stuff in, that to me will possibly lower the content or quality of my program.

Implicit in this ethnocentric perspective is the fear that antiracism will privilege and provide minorities with unearned advantage over other groups. To reinforce the idea of equal treatment some teachers compare the circumstances of the immigrant experience of their parents' generation with the circumstances of today's immigrants. "My dad came to his country with \$64.00. For people of that generation who see people coming in [to Canada] and going plunk onto welfare, they don't like it." Another explains, "When my parents came to this country they had to learn how to speak English and they thought that their duty, but it doesn't appear that anyone does now."

A critical examination of many teachers' readiness to equate the adjustment and assimilation of European immigrants and of racial minority groups into the Canadian socioeconomic structure raises some interesting questions about ethnicity theory. According to Omi and Winant (1994) and Sleeter (1992), white ethnic immigrants can become structurally assimilated into the dominant society despite initial social class and language barriers. Visibly identifiable racial minorities such as Blacks and Aboriginal peoples, however, face many additional obstacles that very often operate to restrict their status to the bottom of the socioeconomic system. In Canada the history of racial and ethnic differences in mobility patterns is well documented (Bolaria & Li, 1988; Daniels, 1987; Li, 1988). Structural inequity faced by visible minorities makes it extremely difficult for them to succeed in the mainstream culture as members of groups of European heritage do (Walker, 1985; Winks, 1971).

The issue of unearned advantage, privilege, and power that antiracism is perceived to bestow on minorities at the expense of the majority groups continues to dominate the thoughts of those teachers who express resistance toward antiracist education. Some argue that becoming "universal" through

increased exposure to the cultural capital of minority groups would seriously threaten the power base of the dominant group. Acceptance of others is seen as an entrapment because “they are taking our power ... our jobs ... they have a different way of living that we won’t accept easily ... We don’t want to see it because we were used to seeing a pure, a pure race.” Yet because power is concentrated in the hands of the dominant groups in society, they become defensive when their position is threatened. Barriers are erected to slow down minority groups who are perceived to be gaining more concessions. In the school, maintenance of power and privilege means continuing the kinds of classroom pedagogy that has been normative among the dominant-group population in schools. “And at least,” one teacher concludes, “in the past, there wasn’t a big stink from other community groups that want to look at equity education ... We want to keep our privilege and our power and we don’t want to share it.”

For teachers with conservative political perspectives, accommodation to antiracist education runs the risk of sharing power and privilege with minority groups in society. It is generally acknowledged that restructuring rarely takes place without contestation and resistance. Suppression of social difference so as to enforce assimilation into the dominant culture is evident in the comments of many teachers. Some evoke the racist concept of *pure Canadian* in their argument as though this image were an historical and social fact. The remark focuses not only on the exclusion/inclusion of *Canadian* (read white European) forms, but attaches a positive relative value to the dominant culture, relegating that of others to a lesser value. It seeks to diminish the input, the history, the stories, the struggles, and the cultural experiences of a large and integral proportion of Canadians.

Conservative Views on Race and Antiracism

Antiracist pedagogy is severely criticized by some teachers for focusing on racism, the mobilization of negative forces in classroom practice, and the destruction of harmonious social relations among racial groups in schools and the larger society. Some respondents expressed concern about problematizing racism in classroom discourse. Awareness of racism is frequently presumed to be unhealthy for students and, they advise, should not to be introduced into their consciousness. This belief thrives despite a number of studies that have disclosed that in multiracial societies children are socialized from an early age into a racial culture that differentiates along racial and ethnic origins (Derman-Sparks, Higa, & Sparks, 1980; Ijaz, 1980; Rizvi, 1993; Troyna & Hatcher, 1992). In a direct reversal of antiracist education principles, conservative teachers in this study claim that exposure to race and racism and other forms of oppression may itself lead to the development of attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate racism. The potency of the following statement reflects the strong conservative position on antiracism held by some teachers: “What ultimately is being taught is not antiracism, but racially based anger.” An antiracist approach is suspected to “stir up the pot,” and “increase resentment in racists.” Antiracism that is “looking for trouble” should, say these teachers, be deemphasized in favor of the more harmonious, benevolent multiculturalism that fosters positive social relations among racial and ethnic groups. It is preferable, one teacher argues, that racism be dealt with by “good, structured, moral

Christian principles.” In these remarks there is an apparent subtext of fear that students of racial minorities will take their newly found empowerment to the extreme, defying and challenging the traditional structures of schooling. The belief that antiracist education is the root cause of interracial tension and mobilizes negative forces in schools is emerging in the British research of Connolly (1992) and McDonald, Bhavnani, Khan, and John (1989).

Denial of the significance of racial difference, although often dutifully exercised in the spirit of liberal humanism, ironically reinforces the will to impose assimilation to the unmarked Eurocentric standard on minority groups. Denial was a salient theme in the Canadian research of Dei (1993), James (1995) and Mock and Masemann (1990), and in the British studies of Figueroa (1991), Gill, Mayor, and Blair (1992) and Troyna (1993) who found that one of the most prominent barriers to successful implementation of race and ethnocultural equity policy was the perception of no racial problems. The language of social difference is often eschewed for fear of accusation of discrimination. Those who attempt to reconcile an equitable teaching approach with an engagement of difference risk entanglement in this double bind.

Discussion

Our research indicates not a correspondence, but a discrepancy between beliefs and practice. Teachers often continue in a generally traditional fashion in the classroom *in spite of their reports that they believe in doing otherwise*. Many teachers, as demonstrated in our larger report, have integrated aspects of antiracist educational innovation into their practice, but this integration—from the point of view of the antiracist criteria—is piecemeal. There may be a willingness to identify individual immorality and ignorance as the correct focus for social change, but such an approach fails to identify the origins of the immorality and ignorance. That is, it fails to name oppression, exploitation, and racism as appropriate topics for debate in the classroom. Some teachers may be willing to take diversions into postcolonial literature or to revise the hidden aspects of the curriculum, but their practice is not likely to reflect consistently the value of diversity that coextends to thorough, systematic, personal, and institutional change toward equitable practices, treatment, and outcomes for all students (Brandt, 1986; Gillborn, 1995; Henry, Tator, Mattis, & Rees, 1995; Solomon & Levine-Rasky, 1994).

Although racial and ethnocultural diversity is a fact of life in Canadian society, a disturbing number of teachers in this study have demonstrated reluctance in acknowledging race, racial difference, and racism as subjects for classroom or professional development discussion. Apprehension about confronting the tensions inherent in a dialogue about antiracist education is common, as it is about identifying the problem from the point of view of marginalized groups. A “color-blind” pretense contradicts other race-related programs in Canadian schooling, not to mention the current trend in policy formation on equity issues. A tacit approval for silencing talk of race in the school community has led to the marginalization of antiracism as a positive initiative. Of more concern is that a growing number of our youth and children are denied a sense of belongingness to the Canadian school culture, while educators who are members of culturally dominant groups rationalize their

social and emotional distance from students who are members of subordinate groups.

These findings are not restricted to Canadian schooling. They are echoed in research on educators' response to racial and ethnocultural diversity in countries such as Britain (Bagley, 1992; Figueroa, 1991; Troyna, 1993; Troyna & Williams, 1986) and the United States (Ahlquist, 1991; King, 1991; Sleeter, 1992). This cross-national discontent may suggest that it is becoming increasingly difficult for educators to defend dominant cultural traditions with their conservative (or liberal) beliefs intact, their material and social privilege vindicated, and their self-image as fair-minded unscathed (Greenman, Kimmel, Bannan, & Radford-Curry, 1992).

More work is called for to reveal the links between teachers' beliefs, sociopolitical dimensions, and personal identity (Acker, 1988) on both theoretical and empirical levels. If a dialectical relationship exists in which social actors both construct and are constructed by the society that is reflected in the school, then persons cannot be separated from either their subjective states or their locatedness in particular social groups that give meaning through their membership in the social order. Yet explorations into the sociopolitical dimensions of resistance together with identity issues could account for the multiple and contradictory manifestations of noncooperation that often coexist in individuals, particularly in response to divisive issues such as race and education. Such an approach could also explain the hegemony of popular belief systems about social inequality to which teachers, along with so many others, subscribe.

Intentional and progressive change toward the integration of antiracist education often anticipates a form of professional development and critically reflective practice. However, to mitigate the debilitating resistance of participants, change must begin with their subjective world, that is, their circumstances, their needs, their fears, and their assumptions. Those professionals in a position to influence program development need to move beyond an analysis confined to teachers' interpretive frameworks. We must delve further into the contradictory and complex realm of teachers' ideologies and their social and professional identities in their sociopolitical context. These are best apprehended when principle meets practice. It is only with exploration of the tensions that are embedded in educational practice for race and ethnocultural equity that transformative action may move into the realm of possibility.

Notes

1. Our focus in this argument is limited to the construct of race and does not raise the important question of its intersections with other loci of social identity such as gender, social class, and sexuality. In doing so, it risks silencing talk of additionally crucial aspects of equity education, of which antiracist education is regarded by some as only one component. Although we respect the struggles taking place at all of these junctures and acknowledge the importance of doing collective work, we have chosen the specific area of race and antiracism for our research at least in part to reflect the way that the notion of race is encountered by public school educators in policy statements, professional activities, and texts. For a discussion of how inequitable social arrangements are played out across multiple categories, see McCarthy (1990) or Davis (1981).
2. The following data are based on respondents' self-identification ($N=1,002$). British Columbia supplied 14.4% of respondents, with 13.9% drawn from Manitoba, 25.7% from each of the two Ontario boards, and 20.3% from Nova Scotia. Women constituted 56.0% and men 32.7%

of respondents, with 11.3% declining to provide this information. Cultural heritage of respondents was 51.2% European-Canadian, 8.1% racial minority, 2.0% other, 5.8% gave no response, whereas 32.9% chose to identify themselves only as Canadian. For years of teaching experience, there was a fairly even distribution between 19.4% for those teachers with 0-5 years experience and 18.5% for those with over 26 years experience. With regard to school panel, 49.7% were elementary and 50.3% were secondary school teachers.

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Parental Involvement: Issues and Concerns

The purpose of this study was to explore how three Alberta schools dealt with the process of restructuring under external pressures brought about by changing government policies. Specifically, the study examined the phenomenon of parental involvement in the restructuring process at the school level. The author concludes that the roles and responsibilities of parents need to be clarified; that there is a need to establish criteria that measure success in relation to various forms of parent involvement; and that participants need support while they struggle to implement a change. A focus on the student as learner is strikingly absent from the debate.

Le but de cette étude était d'explorer comment trois écoles de l'Alberta ont réagi aux processus de restructuration à la suite de pressions externes apportées par les politiques gouvernementales changeantes. Plus spécifiquement, l'étude a examiné le phénomène de la participation parentale dans le processus de restructuration au niveau de l'école. L'auteure conclue que les rôles et les responsabilités des parents doivent être clarifiés davantage; qu'un besoin existe d'établir des critères de mesurer le succès par rapport aux façons variées de participation parentale; et que les participant(e)s ont besoin d'appui pendant qu'ils s'efforcent à implanter des changements. Il est à noter que, dans le débat, l'absence de l'élément élève comme apprenant(e) est remarquablement frappante.

The past decade has seen considerable furor in education across Canada, the United States, Britain, and other nations. At times the criticism of schools in Canada appears to be patterned after events in the United States and Britain, and it is to these countries that we must look for the roots of much of the Canadian critique. The current reform movement in the US can be traced back to the 1983 release of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (Hess, 1994a). Following this report more than a dozen major reports criticizing public schools were issued during the 1980s. The reports gave rise to the first wave of school reform legislation, which focused on accountability. The legislation translated accountability to mean higher standards for teachers, higher graduation standards for students, and higher visibility for school performance levels.

A second wave of school reform focusing on restructuring schools and school districts soon followed. Three strategies emerged as vehicles to accomplish the restructuring. *Enhancing teacher professionalism* is a concept that encompasses a wide variety of approaches, from reshaping teacher preparation programs to giving teachers a sense of empowerment through the sharing in decision making at the school level (Deming, 1982; Senge, 1990). A second strategy, *improving schools through choice*, was given impetus by the publication of *Politics, Markets and American Schools* (Chubb & Moe, 1990). This strategy was

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operationalized through the implementation of concepts including vouchers, parental choice, and charter schools (Martinez, Thomas, & Kemerer, 1994). The third strategy, *parental involvement through school-based management*, shifted power from central office to local school councils. The rationale for the decentralization was simple: local citizens and school personnel knew their schools best and could, if given the chance, solve most of the school's problems.

The roots of the reform movement in Britain can be traced back to the 1980s when the Conservative party, under Margaret Thatcher, began considering school restructuring. During its third term the Thatcher government passed the 1988 English Education Act, which placed each school unit under the control of a local board of governors whose responsibility it was to create policy, set budgets, allocate resources, decide on curriculum, that is, to manage the schools, and in some cases clean the school (Davies & Ellison, 1992).

The impact of mandated parental involvement in school site-based management is a recent phenomenon and the results are inconclusive (Blackshear, 1993; Budd, 1988; Rohlman, 1993). Raywid (1990) suggests there is little evidence of successful site-based management in a school context. Although touted as a positive trend by several researchers (Sirotnik & Clark, 1988), others raise cautions (Wohlstetter & Anderson, 1994).

The purpose of this study was to explore how three Alberta schools dealt with the process of restructuring under external pressures brought about by changing government policies and procedures. Specifically, the study addresses the phenomenon of parental involvement in the restructuring process at the school level.

Literature Review

In theory everyone wants parents involved. In practice there are many problems to be worked out (Barlow & Robertson, 1994, p. 232). Without infrastructures or detailed plans, the downloading of decisions to the school level has the potential to create tensions between the differing ideologies and expectations that individuals bring to the decision making situation.

The dominant characteristics of parent-school relationships commonly prevailing in Canadian schools include: (a) the basic obligation of schools for communication between school and home (report cards, newsletters); (b) parental involvement by assisting learning at home (homework); and, (c) parent involvement in schools (fundraising, field trips, volunteers in classrooms). Wang (1994) conducted research in a Toronto suburb on parents' views regarding their involvement in schools. The findings—the majority of parents felt comfortable with the traditional model of participation and preferred an even lower involvement with schools—support the status quo.

The kind of parental involvement suggested recently by reformers that focuses on advocacy and governance is not part of the traditional pattern of parent-school relationships within the last 50 years. Research has indicated parents' reluctance to become involved in this way. Robinson (1994) found most parents preferred to be informed on matters significant to the school rather than to be part of the school-parent committee to make decisions on matters. A survey of Ontario Parent Council members found that only a minority believed parents should have advisory responsibilities on matters

such as scheduling the school year, planning curricula, or hiring teachers (Ontario Parent Council, 1994).

With a move toward parental involvement in decision making at the school level, the roles of parents, teachers, and principals will undergo change. One of the significant changes in the role of the principal is that of becoming a coordinator for many people with different interests who now determine the direction in which a school will go. According to Murphy (1991), principals will need to place additional emphasis in three areas: "technical core operations, people management skills, and school-environment relations" (p. 27). The changes potentially require new commitments of time and energy and a recognition that the principal is accountable to parents and the school community in new ways (Ford & Bennett, 1994).

Perhaps the title of Hess' (1994b) article captures in a striking way the significant change in teacher role. Hess speaks about the need for teachers to move from a role as interested spectator to one of engaged planner. For the school-based collaborative planning with parents to work, teachers must break out of the parochialism of "my classroom" (p. 253). Because teachers are expected to exercise a voice in major decisions affecting their place of work, they must be able to plan with other adults and be willing to invest the time that such collaborative planning requires.

As parents are invited to participate in serious decision making at the local school level regarding the education of their children, they will need to learn more about how schools function. Together with school personnel, they will "find it necessary to go through [a] kind of painstaking and time-consuming process to reach consensus and avoid hassles" (Yaffe, 1994, p. 704).

According to advocates, the promise of school-based decision making through parental involvement is greater autonomy, greater accountability, and close-to-the-customer responsiveness (Barlow & Robertson, 1994; Alberta Education, 1994a). Decisions usually made by school boards and their officials regarding programming, staffing, teaching assignments, budget, supplies, and maintenance are now to be delegated to individual schools. Because the infrastructure is "inadequate or nonexistent to deal with this changing environment" (Taylor, 1995, p. 17), the questions of who will decide, and who will be accountable for the decisions made, remains a concern.

Research Design and Method

The research was conceptualized as a case study (Stake, 1978), which is an investigation of a bounded system emphasizing the unity and wholeness of the system, but confined to those aspects that are relevant to the research problem at the time (B-6). In a case study a researcher searches for patterns of meaning.

The three schools that participated in the study formed a unity. They were chosen according to criteria that included the following: (a) they had established procedures for parental/community involvement in place; (b) they were representative of different socioeconomic levels; (c) they were willing to participate; and (d) they had a history of involvement in research. The issue under study was the nature of parental involvement in the schools. Foreshadowing questions included: What should be the balance of power between parents and teachers? Do parents "speak" for a community or offer only their own agendas? Where does parent "power" stop? How do parents become involved?

Patterns emerged either as one thing consistently depending on another or as a repeated sequence of action.

Principal Research Activities

Negotiation of entry. A research proposal was submitted and approved by the authorities at both the university and school board levels. I met with the administration and teachers at each school to present the proposal and answer questions. Parent representatives were contacted and invited to participate after each school staff indicated a willingness to participate in the study.

The sample. Three elementary schools in a school jurisdiction in southern Alberta participated in the year-long study. They reflected a cross-section of socioeconomic levels and were situated in different areas of the urban center.

School A was located in a lower socioeconomic community populated by blue-collar workers and minorities; it might be described as *home of the working poor*. Many children came from single-parent households. Very few families owned a home; the majority lived in rental property. Violence and neglect were part of these children's lives. One interviewee described it as the "better of the worst." The school itself had an enrollment of approximately 350 students from kindergarten through grade 4. Students were structured in multiage groupings or "families" with six rooms of grade 1-2 children and six rooms with grade 3-4 children. The kindergarten students were separate. Each "family" was taught by two to three teachers, assisted by a school aide during part of each day.

School B, situated in an older, more stable community, enrolled students from lower- and middle-class homes. Many parents were professionals, including teachers, self-employed consultants, or individuals employed in service industries. The school, with an enrollment of approximately 300 students, had 15 classrooms ranging from kindergarten to grade 6. A change in administrative personnel who aggressively reached out to the community resulted in active parental involvement prior to changes in government policies. A series of community forums involving parents as facilitators was in progress at the school during the time of the study.

Stability and efficiency were the distinguishing characteristics of School C. This school, located in a new, middle-class community, had an enrollment of approximately 600 students in kindergarten to grade 6. Classes were organized in multiaged groupings. Parents were well educated and most were home owners. Community and school staff concerns were addressed through bodies such as a staff-student school council and an active parent advisory council.

Data collection and analysis. A variety of methods was employed to collect data from different sources. First, field notes were recorded on site and transcribed as a series of ongoing entries. The notes were descriptions of events and discussions that occurred at school staff meetings, community-parent-school meetings, and professional development days as observed by the researchers during the period March 1, 1994 to December 15, 1994. No predetermined foci for the field notes were consciously used.

Interviews were a major source of data for the study. A semistructured interview (a series of open-ended questions) was prepared by the researchers prior to meeting with key informants. At each school, interviews were conducted with principal(s), three teachers (selected to represent kindergarten, primary, and upper elementary grades) and the Parent Advisory Council

chairperson or designated key community communicator. A total of 16 30- to 60-minute interviews were conducted. Before the interview each participant signed a consent form giving permission for the interview to be taped and transcribed. A transcript of an interview was shared with the participant.

A third source of data came from a study of government documents, bulletins from the school board, news releases and reports in the local paper, and publications sent out by the Alberta Teachers' Association. Of significance to this study were two provincial government documents entitled *Meeting the Challenge* and *More Facts About Changes to Education* (Alberta Education, 1994a, 1994b)

At the end of the study the data were read and reread for emergent themes (Merriam, 1988). Notes were kept on words and/or phrases expressing ideas around themes that appeared regularly in the data. Each theme was assigned a color. In working sessions, the two researchers together coded the interview and fieldnote data by color, consistently checking for intercoder reliability by exchanging and comparing coded documents. The color-coded data were sorted by theme and entered into a computer database. The data were coded as follows: color = theme; alphabet letter = school; number = interviewee; first two decimal points = page number of interview or fieldnotes; and, last two decimal points = entry number on database page. Thus an entry coded as Yel-C-1.05.01 is identified as a comment related to the theme of parental involvement; from data for the school identified as C; spoken by the first interviewee or collected in first fieldnote; on page 5 of the original interview or fieldnote data; and the first entry on that page. Each data-based theme was analyzed further for subthemes, and it was these that formed the framework for the discussion of a theme.

Findings

An analysis of the theme *parental involvement* suggested a number of sub-themes. First, the concept of parental involvement was not understood or was understood differently by parents and teachers or administrators at a school. Second, the concept of parental involvement was context-bound, that is, operationalized uniquely at each school. Third, the implementation of parental involvement was time-consuming. Fourth, jurisdictional problems could occur. Fifth, parents appeared to have difficulty becoming involved and tended to lose interest in site-based management over time.

The Concept was Understood Differently or Not at All

In *More Facts About Changes to Education* Alberta Education (1994b) outlined general guidelines for the "increased responsibility and involvement of parents" (p. 8) in the "decisions about programs, resources and activities for the education of students" (p. 2). Because detailed implementation procedures did not exist at the time of the study, schools together with their communities struggled to operationalize the concept of parental involvement. A teacher's statement captured the sentiment of many: "there is a role for the parents in the school ... but what it is I don't know." A parent mused, "mostly I think we're here to work alongside the administration and the teachers in the school ... listened to but not catered to." Experimenting with structures to involve parents led a principal to comment, "the parent perception is that I have these

funny ideas.” Another stated, “[we are] starting to define what are the ways that parents can be involved that truly end up with the result of an improved condition for learning for kids.” Participants were agreed, however, that “it’s not involvement for involvement’s sake.”

The evolving conception of parental involvement was accompanied by fears “that we don’t face the threat of a parent pulling our strings for the wrong reasons ... really it’s a power issue ... as long as they [parents] don’t have decision making power over schools.” Perceptions by participants of one another were that “teachers should stop seeing parents as the enemy” and parents “not see me as the fool or as being incompetent or as a person who hasn’t got it right yet.”

Parents expressed a sense of unease when confronted with the expectations held for them in their newly conceptualized roles: “I mean, I’m not qualified to make these decisions.” The power issue was acknowledged: “we are a minority in this ... we don’t feel we can make unbiased decisions ... if you get a close-knit group of parents with all the same beliefs but not necessarily a majority ... the majority isn’t getting what it wants.” As one community leader expressed the concern, “it has to be made very, very clear that if you want to take a leadership role in the decision making, then you have to have an informed basis that you’re making these decisions on, not your own agenda.”

The Concept was Context-bound

Not surprisingly, the nature of parental involvement was context-bound and reflected the particularistic, idiosyncratic, and situational characteristics of each site. Expectations and attitudes held by both parents and teachers influenced the degree and type of parental involvement that evolved. In school A one teacher explained, “when I came to this school, the parents in this area changed the rules for me as a teacher because of the way they raised their kids.” The individual described how teachers were expected to assume greater responsibility for discipline, extracurricular activities, and physical needs (lunch) traditionally provided by the home. The situation was exacerbated by the conflict among community agencies: “there is a block community association but it is at loggerheads with the interagency ... hopefully, the community will pick up some of the stuff rather than us in the school having to pick up this kind of stuff.”

On a positive note, the principal submitted, “I’m doing the best I can with my parent group.” “This year, each meeting I have a major educational issue that needs to be addressed and hopefully it will bring more people out,” Albeit functioning in a limited way, the potential for greater parental involvement was encapsulated in the comment by one of the teachers: “I think it’s important to have parents involved in the school in a positive way in terms of their understanding how a school works and for them to realize that schools do not have magical solutions to their problems or anybody else’s.”

School B, building on a history of parental involvement, had evolved a pattern of parental involvement that was rich and varied. One member of the school community summarized the situation as “we have a real variety of parental involvement intact ... some parents we never see and other parents are constantly involved in very specific ways.” The principal elaborated, “we have, in this community, a wealth of human resources ... teachers who don’t have a

music background are finding creative ways to involve people who have that background. Many of the stay-at-home moms are actually certified teachers."

Opportunities were seized to educate parents: "I have found that some of my work with parents is more situational than three-year plans—I call it parent education" and enlist the teachers' expertise, "parents are saying it's important that we don't overshadow the teacher's voice ... we want to hear from teachers ... we don't have enough time to talk with teachers." A series of public round table forums had been structured, "so that parent dialogue could be part of every monthly meeting ... we're still working on our predetermined list of topics that have been generated."

The matter of attitudes was an issue. As parents became immersed in school affairs, their perceived attitudes toward teachers and the school became a critical component of effective parental involvement. A concern was expressed that "it's not [so much] the fact that parents are involved in the decision making but the attitude they have toward teachers and this place as an institution because we are not seen as human beings ... we're seen as objects."

A monitored type of parental involvement was in place at school C. Key to this school's relationship with the parents were the characteristics of participation and communication. Over time,

the parental involvement is quite heavy ... they know that they're not making educational decisions but they're there ... they see what we're doing ... they hear what we are doing ... they know our goals and, you know, them being there, and even though they haven't input into the goal making and educational decisions, they have agreed to it by their presence and by them knowing.

An encompassing, well-structured decision making process, involving school staff and students, functioned like a well-oiled machine. The attitude pervasive at this school was reflected in the comment, "the decision making about educational activities and programs at the school level should be left to those who know. I don't think parents don't know what's happening and can't give suggestions, but I don't think they should have the final say."

Considerable effort was concentrated on creating an infrastructure to support communication between the school and parents. The teacher was seen as pivotal in the structure. The principal summarized the situation as "what's going to be the best connector with the parent community? That's the teacher. So what I try to do is to ensure that we have good communication set up between the parent and their child's teacher."

Implementing the Concept was Time-consuming

Each of the three schools participating in the study considered the concept of parental involvement to be of a serious nature and was seeking ways to work out the problems associated with "encouraging the inexperienced to struggle over the undefined" (Barlow & Robertson, 1994, p. 232). As Yaffe (1994) predicted, parental involvement led to consequences that school people did not anticipate. One result of the increasing parental involvement was that schools were finding it necessary to go through painstaking and time-consuming processes to reach consensus and avoid conflict. One administrator summarized the situation as "The good part is that people who think everybody

thinks like me soon find out that that's not the case ... but the part that makes me a little weary is that it takes five times as long."

Without a coherent plan the involvement of parents in school-based decision making resulted in the downloading of tensions from within the community into the school. Parents began to identify themselves by interest group. "Parents were making lines of distinction ... parent between parent, for instance, or parents of special education kids and the ones who had kids in regular education." Teachers and principals were careful not to take sides but recognized that "it's up to the school to try to put it back into a natural or normal perspective again ... so that takes time."

The principals encountered changes in their roles. Although principals welcomed the increased involvement of parents, a dominant theme was their expressed concerns about not having enough time to complete all the tasks associated with the implementation of the concept of parental involvement. Activities such as "before the parent meeting, sending out the agenda, and saying this is what we're going to discuss" and "especially support in talking to parents ... taking the time to sit down and plan" took massive amounts of time. As a result principals had less time for other activities like paperwork, supervision of teachers, and professional development (Murphy, 1991).

With parents dropping in more, a principal noted, "availability is a problem ... and not just the availability of me but the availability of the staff who have less time because they are gearing up differently with the different kind of accountability we're facing."

Jurisdictional Problems Arose

Recent government policy assured parents that they would continue to maintain rights under the School Act, which in essence gave parents both a right and a responsibility to make decisions regarding the education of their children (Alberta Education, 1994b). As greater decision making authority was moved to the schools, parents potentially had increased influence on decisions about programs, budgets, allocation of resources, and deployment of staff.

The lack of common understandings and governance structures (Taylor, 1995) created a space where differing perceptions led to jurisdictional problems. A recurring perception voiced by teachers and principals was that

I'd be afraid of people making decisions without really knowing ... you don't put somebody in as president who has no idea what the company is about, what the future plan is, the resources, staff or everything ... so I think to be a good business decision, you have to be very careful about who's running the show.

The perception that parents lacked the necessary information gave rise to the fear that decisions would be related to "the attitude of parents [which] seems to be ... I went to school ... I know what it's like." As well, "implementation of the policies would usurp the authority of the administration of the schools and grant more control to parents who often do not see the whole picture but merely that of their child and their child's needs ... unable to make unbiased decisions ... that just gives them far too much power."

The behavior of several parents indicated their understanding of parental involvement did differ from that held by teachers and principals.

I actually have to go up and down corridors at certain times of the day because we have parents who still haven't figured out that if instruction is going on, that might not be the time to barge into the room and begin a conversation with their child or try to strike up a conversation with the teacher. We're getting better but

...

Other parents arrived at school as advocates for special interest groups with plans "that they want to blanket to everyone" or demanded that the school address special social problems. "There are lots of things wrong in this world but I'm not sure the school is the place to do it. Some people look at me quizzically and others are quite disgruntled that I would take such a position."

The issue of appropriate jurisdictional involvement was of concern to parents as well. A parent stated emphatically, "I, as a parent, don't want to be held accountable for the decisions that are made in the school ... I'm not qualified to make those decisions."

Parents Had Difficulty Becoming Involved

Several major challenges face these schools in their attempts to implement the concept of parental involvement. The school needed to attract a group of parents representing a broad spectrum of community values and interests; keep parents involved; and restructure the parent-school relationships in ways that made parents feel comfortable so they would become involved in significant ways.

The initial challenge facing schools was to create a comfortable environment for parents. The experiences parents remembered from their own school-days colored perceptions. "There's still a lot of people out there that still feel the school is a very scary place for them to come into and I think it's a big group ... reaching out to this group is really important because they are important to the school." Others held assumptions based on "schooling when they went to school and still think schools should be that way" and when they encountered changes they become "justifiably uncertain and therefore somewhat distrustful."

Lifestyle choices and perceived obligations at work precluded the involvement of some parents. Therein lay the potential for these parents to "feel left out ... if we rely on volunteers as the information connections, there is a real potential when information goes to only a few, that you get a minority group making the decisions." Parents were saying, "we have other things on our agenda and we want you to pay attention to those things [curriculum, instruction, staffing]." In some instances a school rarely saw parents, "they're just busy ... I fear for what might happen if these parents continue to be uninvolved as they are." A parent representative voiced a similar concern, that "maybe 10% of the parents have been strong in coming in and speaking."

A second challenge lay in keeping parents involved once they had had an initial contact with the school. "I usually start off the year with a fairly good number but by the end of the year we have fewer coming to meetings." This same sentiment was echoed by a fellow administrator in these words: "the parent meetings we've had so far this year, I've had a good crowd. Now whether we can maintain that I don't know." "Generally speaking, effective and positive people get involved with the school, and provide support in consistent and productive ways."

To address the third challenge—the education of parents—the history and tradition of parent-school relationships was examined and restructured to fit the current legislated configuration. That this issue became the most difficult challenge of all was implied in the thinking of one parent who said, “The feeling in this community is that the school makes the decisions and you know—we’ll do the fundraising type of thing.” An administrator described the struggle related to leading a parent group in a dialogue to plan for future decision making,

Identify what were those core beliefs and values we had about education, then we could agree on a process or a set of processes for coming up with decisions. Then what we needed to do is ensure that we could, when it came time for decisions, that we had a way of tapping into what is the best knowledge and understanding about these things. Well, it was fine until this part ... then, hey, that’s theoretical—who wants that kind of stuff?

The experiences of participants in the three schools indicated there were issues and concerns that needed to be addressed before the new concept of parental involvement could become a viable enterprise. A significant concern was that the roles and responsibilities to be assumed by participants, specifically parents, remained unclear.

Another concern expressed was that parents needed to become informed about schooling and skilled in decision making. Preparation in group process skills was deemed to be necessary to ensure that meetings were productive, debate remained focused on meeting the educational needs of all children, and responsibilities for decision outcomes were shared among all participants.

Discussion

According to its advocates, greater parental involvement promises greater flexibility, greater responsibility and immediate responsiveness to student needs. “It’s hard to find an article praising this model that doesn’t resort to phrases ‘teacher empowerment’, ‘mission’ and ‘vision’, often in the same sentence. The pitch to teachers was that their ‘wisdom is being recognized and utilized’” (Barlow & Robertson, 1994, p. 230), and the pitch to parents was that they would “be involved in the decisions about programs, resources and activities for the education of students” (Alberta Education, 1994b, p. 2).

First, the vague definition of parental involvement as “increased responsibility, involvement, authority and providing advice and guidance” by Halvar Jonson, Minister of Education (Jonson & Martin, 1994, p. A5) became frustrating to parents and school personnel alike as groups struggled to implement the mandated government policy. Structures that would enable parents to become involved in setting priorities and making comparisons among the outcomes did not exist (Taylor, 1995). Yet under a principal’s leadership a school was to “work with parents and members of the community to: (a) establish a school-based management system with significant community involvement; (b) develop school plans, policies, budgets; (c) establish the scope of the school program and extracurricular activities” (Alberta Education, 1994b).

Initial attempts to implement parental involvement under the conditions stated above revealed that the concept was not understood at all or was understood quite differently by parents and school personnel. Participants

readily admitted that there was a role for parents in the school, but were not sure what the role encompassed or looked like. Participants sought ways to work together effectively: experimenting with varying structures (forums, round table discussions, surveys); overcoming fears of one another (parents are not enemies and teachers are not incompetent); and exploring new roles such as collaborator, learner, educator, and mediator.

The question of the appropriate role for parents was open for debate. It was clear to all that the concept of parental involvement was not simply involvement for involvement's sake. Less clearly understood was the need to

learn to keep students as the central focus, share power, foster a risktaking and inquiring climate, take time to interact with students, teachers and community (one another) and help keep a larger vision (rather than a personal agenda) in the forefront of debate, action and continuous assessment. (Fullan, 1993, p. 72)

Second, government policy, albeit not overtly acknowledged, set the stage for the concept of parental involvement to be operationalized in a unique way at each school. Government policy states, "Key to restructuring is making sure that resources and authority are located where education happens ... Parents, teachers and the community must have a meaningful role in decisions that affect students" (Alberta Education, 1994a, p. 3).

Differences did exist as each school set out to implement parental involvement. In the one school, situated in the lower socioeconomic area, parental involvement was identified as limited (Easton & Storey, 1994, p. 228). The participation of parents was low and that of the poor and the minorities was virtually nonexistent. Parents were striving to survive and had neither the time nor skills to become deeply involved in school business. Not able to participate, many parents in this community faced disenfranchisement.

The other two schools, located in lower middle- and middle-class districts, were able to exploit their histories and traditions of parent-school relationships. Higher socioeconomic and education levels appeared to increase the possibility that parents in these two communities felt more comfortable in schools and were more skilled in decision making procedures. In each of these schools, emphasis was placed on the education of parents. In one case the classroom teacher became the vehicle of communication between the school and parents; in the other the principal assumed an active role in setting up a series of forums specifically designed to initiate dialogue among participants.

In specific ways, however, the type of governance implemented at each of these schools differed as a function of how the individual holding the position of principal had conceptualized the role of parental involvement. One school was evolving toward a type of governance that Easton and Storey (1994) refer to as balanced—active, involved, and democratic. Parents were actively encouraged to participate in school-based decision making through a variety of activities—surveys and forums—and community members with mediation skills were asked to chair community-based meetings. Teachers actively sought the involvement of parents, many of whom were certificated teachers, in instruction, specifically in specialized disciplines such as music. Nevertheless, there remained a need to develop trust and respect for each parent participant's talents and potential contributions.

In the other school, similar in many ways to the one described above, the process of parental involvement was dominated by administrators and teachers. Parents were willing to support the decisions made in schools. They perceived themselves as needing more knowledge before becoming involved in school-based decision making. Speaking on behalf of the parent community council, the key communicators stated, "We do not feel parents are properly trained nor educated ... to do anything it is required to do under the regulations." Communication channels were well defined and carefully structured decision making procedures involving school staff and students were in place. Alternative structures emphasizing communication with parents and the larger community were being explored.

Third, not surprisingly, each school was time-bound and time-conscious. With increased parental involvement, principals expressed concern at their not having enough time to complete all the tasks associated with the changes. Principals were quick to point out that they welcomed the increased involvement of parents in the school; however, at times they appeared to become overwhelmed with the massive amounts of time taken up by parents appearing at school to talk. Activities such as preparing for and attending meetings and educating or encouraging parents to focus their concerns on learning and on serving the needs of all children in the school also took considerable time.

Principals acknowledged that they needed to foster a collaborative style of decision making. Although consultation took place, the perception remained that the principal was ultimately responsible for getting things done. Tensions surfaced when the time required to consult with others when making decisions slowed the process of accomplishing certain tasks, especially with impending deadlines. As principals and teachers spent time listening to parents, tensions between and among community groups tended to filter into the school environment. When such an event occurred, time was needed to mediate the debate and once again set the school on its course. Principals also experienced dissonance as they came to understand that the way they had allocated their time in the past no longer seemed to be appropriate or productive in the changed environment.

Fourth, if the concept of parental involvement was to work, jurisdictional boundaries had to be understood, applied appropriately, and respected by the participants. Reporting on their preliminary research, Davies and Ellison (1992) noted that in Britain the school-based governing bodies experienced confusion about roles and responsibilities related to setting policy and doing administration (Rohlman, 1993). Likewise, schools in this study were engaged in the initial stages of experimentation with the concept of parental involvement. Current government policy failed to clarify jurisdictional issues and "doesn't give school system leaders the tools to deal with this new environment" (Taylor, 1995, p. 17). Several emergent jurisdictional issues became problematic.

The potential roles that parents could fulfill remained unclear. For several parents the policy translated into a perceived right to seek special services for their child or to enter the school at any time with immediate access to an administrator or a teacher. Others took on the role of advocate for a special interest group in the community. At times a request for a program or activity of

interest to a vocal minority was proposed as suitable for all children. Some community members went so far as to ask the school to become more involved in addressing social issues such as violence, abuse, and nutrition.

Those parents who were interviewed felt uneasy when confronted with the notion that they were not only to share in the making of decisions, but also to be held accountable for the consequences of the decisions. A perceived lack of knowledge about schooling and lack of experience and skills in decision making precluded many parents from assuming any role in formulating school policy. Wang (1994) and Robinson (1994) found that many parents felt comfortable with the traditional model of participation and in some cases preferred even lower involvement in the schools. At this time similar conclusions about the parents in the study could be drawn.

Finally, the comments of participants in this and other studies (David, 1994; Foster, 1994; Wang, 1994) indicated that parents were hesitant to become involved in the business of running a school. The belief that parents are a child's most influential teachers is widely accepted. When the school reflects and reinforces the values of the home and the home supports efforts of the school, children learn in an environment of shared purposes and consistent expectations (Tymko, 1994). The situation described may appear to be idealistic and impossible to attain. That many schools do indeed achieve a positive working relationship with their communities is indicated in data collected by recent surveys that "clearly indicate that in most districts' schools, parents are overwhelmingly positive about their level of involvement" (Foster, 1994, p. A5). Eynon (1994), spokesperson for the Calgary Council of the Home and School Association, suggested, "parents will likely have mixed feelings over getting more involved in their children's education.... Some parents are likely to say, 'listen, we've got busy lives. How much more do we need to get involved?'" (B5).

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore how three schools undertook the process of restructuring in light of changes in educational policy and governmental funding. Specifically, the study focused on the concept of parental involvement. The conclusions, based on the experiences of three schools in the first year of policy implementation, may be considered to be preliminary and tentative; however, their content does warrant serious consideration.

First, the roles and responsibilities to be assumed by participants, specifically parents, need to be clarified. Government policy is needed to set rules governing the role of parents in school-based decision making. At the time of the study it remained unclear whether the schools were to be run by parents in cooperation with the teachers and principals or whether parents were to act in an advisory capacity to school-based personnel.¹

Second, the rhetoric in government policy documents strongly implied that increased local parental authority would improve schools. The school improvement was to be measured against "the standards defined by provincial academic achievement assessments and graduation requirements" (Alberta Education, 1994a, p. 6); "the implementation of cost control measures such as value for money audits" (p. 12); and "the required annual report on designated indicators to the government and the public" (p. 10). The findings of the study

suggest that the implementation of parental involvement failed to demonstrate a link between type or degree of parental involvement and improvement in student learning.

A sad outcome at the time of the study was that none of the persons involved in the implementation of parental involvement was feeling successful: not parents, teachers, or administrators. Parents tended to become frustrated when personal agendas were not heard, or they remained fearful in making their wishes known. In the community populated by less well educated and poorer families, overall parental participation in school activities was low.

Teachers appeared to remain uncomfortable with the possibility that parents were able to have a say in what occurred in "their" school. Teachers also feared that personal and political interests, rather than pedagogical concerns, would determine educational outcomes.

Principals felt the pressure that came from the need to change roles, allocate their time in different ways, and deal with the community tensions that filtered into the school. The perceived lack of time to carry out the additional duties associated with the changes added to their feelings of stress.

Strikingly absent from the debate related to the concept of parental involvement was mention of the student as learner or individual. A perusal of government documents speaks of parents having "a right and responsibility to make decisions regarding the education of their children" (Alberta Education, 1994a, p. 10). Students are primarily regarded as potential entrants into the work force. Teachers and administrators expressed concern that issues related to teaching and learning appeared to be of lesser concern. The student remains the one consideration with capacity to raise the debate surrounding parental involvement beyond arguments related to issues of power, jurisdiction, and money.

If parental involvement is to be successfully implemented, attention must be given to: (a) the creation of school-level governance structures including role definitions and responsibilities that parents might fill; (b) the establishment of criteria to measure success that are closely aligned to parental involvement rather than to student achievement test scores or to the audit of budgets, and (c) the provision of support (financial, time, and psychological) to participants so they feel successful while struggling to implement a change. The conclusions of this study are supported by Fullan's (1993) statement, "Changing format structures is not the same as changing norms, habits, skills and beliefs. To restructure is not to reculture" (p. 40).

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Note

1. The final rules make it clear that the role of councils is only advisory. Parent councils will not have responsibility for hiring, budgeting, or implementation of school programs.

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Parental Print Exposure and Young Children's Language and Literacy Skills

We examined the relations of parental print exposure, SES, and education to young children's language and literacy skills. Thirty-nine 5- and 6-year-old children in their first year of school were given vocabulary, printing performance, and phonemic awareness tests. Parents completed Stanovich and West's (1989) checklist measures of print exposure. Phonemic awareness was correlated with the print exposure of both parents, as well as with mothers' and fathers' education and family SES. Vocabulary test scores correlated with mothers' print exposure and did not correlate with parental education or family SES. Printing performance was correlated with mothers' and fathers' print exposure and mothers' education. Stepwise multiple regression analyses suggested that parental education and print exposure are related to early language and literacy skills and that SES does not account for individual differences in these measures.

Nous avons examiné la relation entre le montant de texte écrit auxquels sont exposés les parents, le statut socio-économique, et l'éducation linguistique des jeunes enfants et leurs habiletés d'alphabétisation. Trente-neuf enfants âgés de cinq à six ans dans leur première année d'école ont subi des tests de vocabulaire, de performance écrite, et de perception phonémique. Pour leur part, les parents ont complété la liste de contrôle de Stanovich et West (1989) qui mesure le montant de lecture auquel ils et elles sont exposé(e)s. On a trouvé qu'il existait une corrélation entre le montant de texte écrit auquel étaient exposés les deux parents, leur connaissance phonémique, le niveau d'éducation des mères et des pères, et le statut socio-économique de la famille. On a également démontré qu'il y avait une corrélation entre les scores des tests de vocabulaire des enfants et le montant de texte écrit auquel les mères étaient exposées et que ces scores ne corrêlaient pas avec l'éducation des parents ou le statut socio-économique de la famille. Il y avait aussi corrélation entre la performance écrite des enfants et le montant de texte écrit auquel étaient exposés les mères et les pères et l'éducation de la mère. Les analyses de régressions multiples en étapes suggèrent que l'éducation des parents et le montant de texte écrit auquel ils sont exposés sont reliés aux habiletés langagières hâtives et d'alphabétisation et que le statut socio-économique n'explique pas les différences individuelles dans ces domaines.

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After reviewing the literature on the influence of the quantity and quality of reading to young children on later reading outcomes, Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) argued that the assumption that more is better may be overstated, that the amount of reading preschoolers are exposed to accounts for only 8% of the variance in later reading ability, and that factors such as socioeconomic status (SES) are more predictive of literacy acquisition (Baydar, Brooks-Gunn, & Furstenberg, 1993; Fotheringham & Creal, 1980). If we accept the view that SES is related to literacy acquisition, it is worth asking why there is such a link. One of the mediating influences between SES and early reading may be the amount of reading that parents engage in. The data on this relationship do not support the intuition that parents who read on their own model an interest in reading and portray reading as a valued activity (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994). This may be due in part, however, to the way in which adult reading has been measured using questionnaires, interview, or activity diary techniques. In the use of such measures, social desirability may confound retrospective estimation of reading activities and long-term commitment on behalf of research participants may affect the validity and reliability of the measurement of parental reading. In order to reduce the impact of these variables on the measurement of adult literacy, our study used Stanovich and West's (1989) checklist-with-foils methodology in which people are asked to differentiate between titles of actual and foil magazine titles, authors, and cultural figures. The checklist methodology holds three advantages over previous methods: it is immune to social desirability effects, it requires minimal time on the part of the participant, and it makes a low cognitive demand.

Because avid readers differ from nonreaders in many respects, there are several reasons why parental print exposure may predict children's emergent literacy. First, variation in adult print exposure is a substantial predictor of variation in adult vocabulary. This may be because moderate- to low-frequency words are more common in print than in speech (Hayes, 1988). Increased exposure to print will both facilitate understanding and promote the use of relatively more moderate- to low-frequency words. Children learn written language through active language interactions with adults; therefore, children whose parents have high levels of print exposure may benefit from exposure to a rich vocabulary. Second, adult print exposure levels are highly predictive of declarative knowledge bases, including cultural and orthographic knowledge (West, Stanovich, & Mitchell, 1993). Children of parents who read more may benefit from these effects by acquiring knowledge primarily through incidental exposure rather than explicit teaching. Third, parental print exposure is a significant predictor of parental reading comprehension and verbal intelligence (McBride-Chang, Manis, Seidenberg, Custodio, & Doi, 1993). This may enhance the adult's ability to explain literacy-related concepts to the child. Furthermore, because adults with little print exposure may be infrequent readers, their children might receive relatively less exposure to literacy activities (both direct and indirect) than children whose parents are avid readers. As a result, these children's acquisition of literacy-related knowledge may be significantly impeded (Scarborough, Dobrich, & Hager, 1991). Finally, exposure to print may develop increased interest and persistence in reading

challenging material. This may aid the child by contributing to the modelling process mentioned above.

To assess children's language and literacy skills, we included measures of phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and printing performance. Phonemic awareness is a skill that has been repeatedly linked with early literacy (Cunningham, 1990; Stuart-Hamilton, 1986; Warren-Luebecker & Carter, 1988). Phonemic awareness specifically refers to the ability to perceive spoken words as a series of sounds (Lewkowicz, 1980) and the ability to discriminate among phonemes. Bradley and Bryant (1983) administered a task of auditory discrimination to 285 5-year-old children and found correlations with reading and spelling measures more than three years later. Similar results have been obtained by Stanovich, Cunningham, and Feeman (1984) and by Wallach, Wallach, Dozier, and Kaplan (1977). As well, Wagner and Torgesen (1987) found this relationship to exist even after controlling for IQ.

Another predictor of emergent literacy is visual motor skill, particularly the ability to form letters and numbers. Training in printing has been found to improve scores on standardized emergent literacy tests (Adams, 1992). The exercise of printing encourages simultaneous integration of the visual, motor, and phonological images of a specific letter and refines skills that are critical to reading and writing. Simner (1982) found that when children were asked to reproduce a series of letters and numbers, those who made *form errors* (overall changes in the shape of a letter or number) were at risk for early failure or grade retention.

Vocabulary also plays an important role in emergent literacy. Vocabulary contributes to the comprehension of the ideas being communicated by a particular piece of writing (McBride-Chang et al., 1993). According to the environmental opportunity hypothesis, differential opportunities for word knowledge will result in differences in vocabulary level (Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993). Specifically, these differential opportunities include environmental factors such as level of exposure to written words and the amount of interest, attention, and communicative adult interaction (Horodezky & Labercane, 1983; McBride-Chang et al., 1993). Parental responses to children's vocal expressions are an essential component in children's early language development; parents not only provide a model for their children's vocabulary development but also determine in part the type of language their children may ultimately use. In a study of grade 4 children, Cunningham and Stanovich (1990) found that individual differences in vocabulary knowledge were predicted by exposure to print after controlling for phonological processing, memory, age, and nonverbal intelligence. Similar results have been obtained by Stanovich and Cunningham (1992, 1993) with undergraduate students.

It was expected that there would be a relationship between measures of parental print exposure and children's scores on tests of early language and literacy skills. Other research has used definitions of SES that also include parental education, school resources, and home atmosphere. When these variables are extracted from the definition of SES, correlations with school achievement are no longer significant (White, 1982). It was one of the goals of this research to examine parents' print exposure and education separate from SES. It was expected that parental education would correlate positively with paren-

tal print exposure, that parental print exposure and education would correlate positively with emergent literacy, and that once these factors had been accounted for, SES would not explain variability in performance on early reading measures. The relative contributions of SES, parental education, and parental print exposure to the variance in measures of children's language and literacy skills were examined using stepwise multiple regression analyses.

Method

Participants

Thirty-nine primary grade (kindergarten) children (20 boys, 19 girls; $M = 6.0$ years) from two rural schools and their parents/guardians (27 men, 37 women; $M = 34.8$ years) participated in the study. Thirty-five of the 64 parents/guardians were employed at the time of the study: 11 families had dual-earner parents, nine families had employed fathers only, seven families had employed mothers only, and in three families neither parent was employed. Demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1.

Materials

Parental print exposure measures. Three tests were used to assess parental cultural literacy. These were the condensed versions of the Magazine Recognition Test (MRT), the Author Recognition Test (ART), and the Cultural Literacy Test (Stanovich & West, 1989). West et al. (1993) found high split-half reliability correlations for each of these measures (MRT=.77; ART=.82; CLT=.90) and correlations with vocabulary checklists (MRT=.48; ART=.62; CLT=.71).

Each of these tests consists of a list of targets (i.e., real magazines, authors, and famous persons respectively) intermixed with a number of foils (i.e., names that are not those of magazines, authors, or famous persons respectively). The adults' task is to respond *Yes* to those names on each list that they know

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Sample

	Parents	Children
Male	27	20
Female	37	19
Mean Age (years)	34.8	6.0
<i>Parent Employment</i>		
Father Employed Only		14
Mother Employed Only*		11
Both Parents Employed		11
Both Parents Unemployed		3
<i>SES^a</i>		
Mean	51.6	
Range	25.36-101.32	
SD	19.92	

^anumber indicates SES as measured by the 1981 Socioeconomic Index for Occupations in Canada.

*six of these families were single-parent households.

to exist as either magazines, authors, or famous persons, and *No* to those that they do not recognize. These measures were scored by subtracting the proportion of foil items answered *Yes* from the proportion of real items answered *Yes*. Original instructions to participants were altered slightly as a result of telephone administration. For example, instructions for the Magazine Recognition Test were as follows:

I am about to read a list of 25 titles. Some of them are names of actual magazines and some are not. As I say each title, please respond with "yes" if you recognize it as a magazine, or "no" if you do not. Do not guess, but only respond "yes" to those titles you know to exist as magazines. Do you have any questions?

Children's emergent literacy measures. Three tests were used to measure children's emergent literacy. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test—Revised (PPVT-R), Form L (Dunn & Dunn, 1981) was administered under standard testing conditions to assess receptive vocabulary. Standardized scores were used as the dependent measure. The PPVT-R, Form L has been shown to be an effective and reliable means of assessing receptive vocabulary. The median correlation with vocabulary tests has been found to be .71, the correlation with the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale is .62, and the correlation with the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children—Revised (WISC-R) is .66. Split-half reliability correlations range from .79 to .84. Immediate test-retest reliability correlations range from .78 to .80, whereas delayed (one month) test-retest reliability correlations range from .67 to .69.

An abbreviated form of the Printing Performance School Readiness Test (APPSRT; Simner, 1989) was given to each child. The APPSRT is a tool that measures both motor skills and visual discrimination related to printing. It has been shown to be 70-78% effective in identifying those children who will later experience learning problems, particularly in reading and arithmetic. Simner (1989) has reported product-moment correlations of .42 and .58 between children's scores on the APPSRT in prekindergarten and their subsequent reading performance at the end of grade 1. The test consists of two tables, each containing a combination of nine letters that have been shown to be most predictive of later school difficulty. Below each letter or number is a space in which the child is required to replicate the item above it. Each letter/number reproduction is assigned a score of either zero (errors absent) or one (errors present) for a test score of the total number of errors.

A test of phonemic awareness, the Auditory Discrimination Test of Bradley and Bryant (1983), consisted of 30 trials in which three words, two of which share a common phoneme, were read aloud to the child. The child was asked to detect the odd word. Scores consisted of the percentage of correct responses.

Procedure

Parents were interviewed by telephone with the order of presentation of the literacy tests counterbalanced. Parents were also questioned about education, age, family reading habits, and employment. Education level for each parent was coded as one of the following categories: some high school; completed high school; some post secondary school; bachelor's degree; master's degree; or PhD. SES was measured using the 1981 Socioeconomic Index for Occupations in Canada (Blisshen, Carroll, & Moore, 1987), in which occupations are coded

hierarchically based on the median annual income, social status, and years of education to obtain the occupation for all paid labor force participants in each category. The score for the working parent was recorded in single income households, whereas in double income homes the average of the two scores was calculated. SES was not recorded if neither parent was employed. Scores for our sample ranged from 21.36 to 101.32, representing a range of occupations from farm worker to physician. After completing the telephone interviews, the children were individually tested in a private room at the school. The order of administration of all measures was counterbalanced.

Results

Means, ranges, and standard deviations for children's and parents' literacy measures are presented in Table 2. Compared with previous samples of children tested with these measures, children in our study performed slightly above the average range of functioning in terms of receptive vocabulary and printing performance (as measured by the PPVT-R and the APPSRT) but slightly below average on the phonemic awareness task. The means on the adult checklist measures are slightly higher than those reported by West et al. (1993) where the means were 51.5%, 34.9%, and 46.4% for the MRT, ART, and CLT respectively.

Correlations Between Parental Print Exposure and Emergent Literacy Measures

A correlation matrix displaying the relations between measures of parental print exposure and measures of children's emergent literacy is presented in Table 3. Only those correlations with $p < .01$ will be interpreted as reliable. Mothers' scores on the Magazine Recognition Test were correlated with children's performance on the auditory discrimination and vocabulary measures. Relations between the different measures of parental print exposure for both mothers and fathers were also found. Mothers' education was correlated with

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Children's Emergent Literacy and Parents' Print Exposure Measures

Measure	M	Range	SD
<i>Children</i>			
PPVT-R (standard scores)	106.3	74-135	12.7
APPSRT (# errors)	1.3	0-5	1.3
Auditory Discrimination (%)	50.0	17-97	23.3
<i>Mothers</i>			
MRT	47.8	0-94.0	32.3
ART	41.0	0-94.0	26.8
CLT	52.4	10.0-87.0	22.3
<i>Fathers</i>			
MRT	55.1	0-100.0	27.7
ART	46.1	0-94.0	26.3
CLT	58.1	10.0-93.0	19.6

Table 3
Correlations Between SES, Parents' Education, and Emergent Literacy Measures

	<i>APPSRT</i>	<i>Auditory Discrimination</i>	<i>PPVT-R</i>
<i>Mothers</i>			
MRT	-.28	.45**	.47**
ART	-.20	.33*	.36*
CLT	-.36*	.29	.33*
Education	-.40*	.43**	.28
<i>Fathers</i>			
MRT	-.35	.45*	.30
ART	-.47*	.39*	.31
CLT	-.33	.38*	.22
Education	-.26	.47*	.25
<i>Family SES</i>	-.33	.38*	.14

**p*<.05.

***p*<.01.

children's auditory discrimination task scores. Fathers' education and family SES were not correlated with children's early reading measures.

Correlations Between Parental Variables and Print Exposure Measures

The correlations between parents' education and their scores on the print exposure measures are reported in Table 4. Mothers' education was correlated with their scores on each of the checklists in a range from .56 to .64. Significant correlations were also found between fathers' education and fathers' print

Table 4
Correlations of Parental Education and SES with Print Exposure Measures

	<i>Education</i>	<i>SES</i>
<i>Mother</i>		
MRT	.64***	.35*
ART	.63***	.44*
CLT	.56***	.30
Total Print Exposure	.65***	.40*
<i>Father</i>		
MRT	.64***	.63**
ART	.70***	.76***
CLT	.60**	.72***
Total Print Exposure	.70***	.75***

**p*<.05.

***p*<.01.

****p*<.001.

exposure measures, ranging from .60 to .70. SES was found to be significantly correlated with measures of fathers' print exposure, whereas none of the measures of mothers' print exposure was reliably correlated with SES.

Stepwise Regression Analyses

Multiple regression analyses were conducted using a stepwise entry process to examine the relative contributions of SES, parental education, and total parental print exposure to variance in children's emergent literacy measures. Total print exposure represents the sum of all three of the checklist measures. For each dependent measure, only one variable was entered. Mothers' education accounted for 25% of the variance in children's printing performance ($F[1, 23] = 8.58, p < .01$), whereas mothers' total print exposure accounted for 21% of the variance in vocabulary scores. Fathers' education accounted for 18% of the variance in auditory discrimination ($F[1, 23] = 4.78, p < .05$).

Discussion

These data provide support for the hypothesis that parental print exposure influences children's literacy development. There were significant relations between measures of mothers' print exposure and children's vocabulary and phonemic awareness. Measures of fathers' print exposure were correlated with phonemic awareness, although statistically less reliable due to a smaller number of fathers than mothers. For each parent there was a relation between only one measure of print exposure and children's printing performance. These relations may have been difficult to detect due to the limited variability in the number of printing errors made by the children. In the multiple regression analyses, maternal print exposure accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in vocabulary scores.

Both parents' education appears to play an important role in phonemic awareness, and mothers' educational attainment was related to children's printing performance. SES was not correlated with either vocabulary or printing performance, but did correlate with phonemic awareness. Regression analysis revealed that SES did not contribute unique variance to phonemic awareness discrimination scores once fathers' education was accounted for. This pattern of results suggests that job status has less impact on literacy outcomes for children than does parental education and that print exposure is more highly associated with children's vocabulary than either education or SES. Print exposure may increase the likelihood that children are exposed to more low-frequency words, and thus there may be some direct benefits for children's vocabulary. These results are encouraging; they indicate that factors under parents' control such as reading and to a lesser extent education may have a significant impact on their children's development. This is consistent with the results of a meta-analysis conducted by Bus, van Ijzendoorn, and Pelligrini (1995) on the effects of reading to preschoolers. They found that joint book reading accounted for 8% of the variance in later reading outcome measures and that the size of the effect was independent of SES.

The participants in our study represented people from varied socioeconomic backgrounds, with occupational title status as measured by the Blishen et al. (1987) index ranging from 25.36 (farm worker) to 101.32 (physician). Children's reading measures also indicated that the sample was representative of a variety

of skill levels, (e.g., standard scores on the PPVT-R ranged from 74 to 135). There was limited variability in scores for the APPSRT, with relatively high performance on this measure. Simner (1989) reported that 33% of a sample of 166 children produced 16 or more errors; in our study the highest number of form errors recorded was five. The data were collected in this study after the children had completed four months of kindergarten, so maturational and educational differences may have affected printing performance. By contrast, the mean auditory discrimination score was 50% as compared with Bradley and Bryant's (1983) mean of 69% with similarly aged children. There may have been little emphasis on phonemic segmentation in the reading curriculum of the children in our study, although the variability in performance on the phonemic awareness measure suggests that the results are generalizable to a broader population.

West et al. (1993) found that performance on the print exposure checklists accounted for a substantial amount of variance in vocabulary tests and measures of cultural literacy, even after accounting for age and education, indicating that print exposure is a significant influence on cognitive development in adulthood. Our data suggest that print exposure also has a trans-generational influence on literacy skills. The checklist-with-foils methodology allowed us to study variability in print exposure without relying on self-report of reading time or making cross-cultural comparisons of the children of literate and illiterate parents. We did not address the particular mechanism by which the benefits of print exposure are transmitted to children. It may be that children whose parents read more also read more themselves because reading is a valued activity, although the children in our sample would have been classified as prereaders. It is also possible that parents who read themselves also read more to their children. Future research in this area should address the mechanisms by which parental print exposure affects the intergenerational transmission of literacy.

Acknowledgments

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Research Notes

Editor's Note

What follows is an initial set of guidelines for submissions to the *Research Notes* section of *AJER*. These guidelines may be modified over time. In future, for easy reference, the criteria for *Research Notes* will be incorporated into the manuscript guidelines *For Contributors*, which appear at the back of each issue of *AJER*.

Initial Guidelines

The *Note* reporting on the author/authors' research-in-progress should feature work that is not yet completed or being reported elsewhere in journal publications. This current work should be situated in the context of the author/authors' overall program of related research and, briefly, in the context of other related scholarship. The focus of the *Note* could be either a specific study or inquiry that is underway or an overview of an ongoing line of enquiry, where fuller reporting of results will not occur in print for some time. The maximum length for a *Note* is 1,000 words (about 4 double-spaced pages in standard 12-point type), excluding references and one or two tables or graphs. To encourage communication between researchers, authors of *Research Notes* are asked to provide contact information such as e-mail, fax, and/or telephone numbers for publication with each *Note*. No abstract is required, but in all other respects the usual *AJER* guidelines for manuscripts should be observed.

Submissions to *Research Notes* will be reviewed for readability, clarity, organization, length, and adherence to the standard *AJER* guidelines. Any submission that is judged to meet these criteria will be published as soon as possible to minimize the usual delays in moving submissions to publication. Any submission that is judged to require revisions according to the criteria outlined will not be published, as the *Notes* must have currency if they are to serve the purposes identified.

Research Notes

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Antiracist/Multicultural Teacher Education: A Focus on Student Teachers

Introduction

Despite a growing body of international literature in the area (Anti-Racist Teacher Education Network, 1986; Banks & Banks, 1995; Grant & Sacada, 1990; Lynch, 1986; Verma, 1993), multicultural and antiracist teacher education in Canada constitute in large part uncharted terrain.

In the literature that does exist, most attention is focused on descriptions and analyses of existing programs in faculties of education (Henley & Young, 1987; Masemann & Mock, 1986; Nyce, 1990; Orlikow & Young, 1993; Young, 1995). Little attention has been given to the examination of preservice teachers' perspectives—values, knowledge, and skills—related to matters of "race"/racism, ethnicity, culture, and teaching, or, critically, to the relationships between various program initiatives and the development of teacher perspectives.

Yet any assumption of a tight connection between program prescriptions and student outcomes is made problematic on at least two counts. First, the curricula of teacher education programs in Canada rather than presenting a unified and coherent view of teaching are more often fragmented and contradictory, reflecting what Reed and Beveridge (1993) refer to as "the pluralistic epistemology of teacher education." Second, there is a substantial body of research (Calderwell, 1987; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1985) that demonstrates that students bring to faculties of education well-entrenched conceptions of teaching that significantly shape the ways in which they attach meaning to their experiences there.

The research we are currently interested and involved in attempts to move beyond our earlier focus on programs and explores some of these issues of teacher perspectives. We are interested in examining: (a) the varied perspectives on teaching and "race"/racism, ethnicity, and culture that students bring into their programs; (b) the ways in which these perspectives are developed and reformulated in their programs; and (c) the degree to which perspectives are sustained during a teacher's first year of employment. The research that is reported briefly in the rest of these notes is a prelude to this agenda, which

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involved a survey of some 221 students graduating from the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba in 1994.

The Context and Research Design

In the spring of 1994 a questionnaire was mailed to all 352 students eligible to graduate from the Bachelor of Education program at the University of Manitoba. The questionnaire examined:

1. students' perspectives on multiculturalism and multicultural/antiracist education;
2. students' views of their knowledge base related to specific elements of multicultural/antiracist education, and the sources of that knowledge; and
3. students' perspectives on their student teaching/practicum experiences.

Completed surveys were received from 221 students (a response rate of 63%), and the data from the survey, in addition to providing some commentary on the specifics of the program at the University of Manitoba, serve as a vehicle for us to raise more general questions of multicultural and antiracist teacher education.

Some Findings from the Survey

Students' Views on Multicultural and Antiracist Education

Questionnaires provide only a partial, and at times simplistic, insight into students' perspectives, and interpretations of the data from these questionnaire responses need to be treated as both tentative and speculative. In the first two sections of the questionnaire students were asked to respond to a number of selected statements related to (a) equity, diversity, and multiculturalism in Canada, and (b) the roles and responsibilities of public schools in a multicultural society. Students' responses to the second of these sets of questions are summarized in Table 1.

Data from Table 1 suggest to us the following:

- most students expressed support (although not strong support) for a version of multicultural education that calls for an inclusive curriculum and an inclusive teaching force, and that applies to all schools;
- the majority of students are somewhat critical of schools' current effectiveness in developing student appreciation of racial and cultural diversity in Canada, as well as their ability to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students;
- a majority of students saw racism as a major problem in Canadian schools, yet they also agreed with the statement "all students have a fair chance to succeed in school regardless of their racial or cultural background."

One interpretation of these responses (coupled with respondents' choice not to use the *strongly agree/strongly disagree* categories) might be that students' understanding of the concept of racism is focused on individual acts rather than systemic practices, and trivializes these acts as inappropriate, but at the same time not having a significant impact on students' school experiences.

Students' Knowledge Bases in Multicultural/Antiracist Teaching

In the third segment of the questionnaire a variety of areas of knowledge related to multicultural teaching were identified, and students were asked three questions of each area: (a) how knowledgeable they felt about the area; (b) where they had acquired their knowledge; and (c) whether the sources of

Table 1
Students' Responses to Multicultural/Antiracist Education
(percentages)

Questionnaire Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
It is important that school practices reflect the cultural and racial diversity of Canada	0.5	6.4	87.2	5.9	3.01
It is important that the teaching profession represent the racial and cultural diversity of Canadian society	0	12.4	82.5	5.0	2.95
Racism is a major problem for students in Canadian schools	0	40.5	58.1	1.4	2.66
All students have a fair chance to succeed in school regardless of their cultural or racial background	0.9	41.0	54.4	3.7	2.60
Parents from minority groups can influence public schools as much as parents from dominant groups	0	48.9	50.2	0.9	2.52
Schools are successful in developing students' appreciation of racial and cultural diversity	0.5	53.5	46.0	0	2.48
Schools are generally effective in addressing the educational needs of Aboriginal students	0.5	69.8	28.3	1.4	2.36
Multicultural and antiracist education is only important in racially or culturally mixed schools	9.1	89.5	1.4	0	1.92

knowledge contributed to their knowledge level in a major or minor way. Their responses are summarized in part in Table 2.

Student' responses to these questions suggest a number of things to us including the following:

- Few graduating students considered themselves to be *very knowledgeable* in any of the areas identified. There may be many explanations for this, other than the obvious suggestion that these issues are not addressed in the preservice program. Another suggestion might be that as new graduates without any work experience they would be reluctant to describe themselves as very knowledgeable in *any* area of teaching.
- Based on the above suggestion, if *moderately knowledgeable* is a more reasonable expectation for new graduates, then only three areas—racial and cultural diversity in Canada, parental and community involvement, and the nature and origins of prejudice—have a relatively high proportion of students identifying themselves in this category.
- In all other areas, around half of the students stated that they had little or no knowledge in the area—even though we would argue these constitute quite basic elements of a teacher knowledge base.
- In identifying the sources of whatever knowledge they had, *personal and life experience* ranked first in six of the eight areas identified, followed most often by student teaching and required education courses.

Table 2
A Multicultural/Antiracist Teaching Knowledge Base

Knowledge Area	Knowledge Level Index Mode*	Knowledge Source (Percentage)										Subject Area
		Personal/Life Experience		Student Teaching				Required Educ. Courses		Elective Educ. Courses		
		Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	
Cultural and racial diversity in Canada	3 (81%)	10.0	86.9	5.0	82.4	3.6	81.9	6.3	76.9	1.4	62.9	Subject Area
Importance of parental and community involvement	3 (75%)	6.3	76.9	7.2	75.6	3.2	70.6	5.4	63.8	3.2	70.6	
The nature and origins of prejudice and racism	3 (73%)	7.2	81.0	3.6	67.0	4.5	66.1	7.2	64.3	0.9	43.9	
Teaching strategies to combat prejudice and racism	3 (54%)	5.9	75.6	4.5	62.9	4.1	64.7	6.8	69.2	0.9	40.3	
Cultural bias in curriculum	3 (55%)	3.2	55.7	2.3	57.0	3.2	58.8	5.4	62.9	0.9	36.2	
Teaching ESL	2 (56%)	7.2	67.0	7.2	64.3	2.3	51.1	5.4	58.4	2.3	42.1	
Legislation and policies related to multicultural education	2 (59%)	4.5	72.4	56.4	56.1	3.2	75.1	4.1	66.1	0.9	42.5	

*The survey asked students to categorize their knowledge levels as: 1—No Knowledge; 2—Some Knowledge; 3—Moderate Knowledge; and 4—High Level of Knowledge. The Knowledge Level Index Mode in Table 2 represents the level of knowledge selected by the majority of the students as well as the percentage of students who selected that level.

Table 3
Students' Responses to Level of Preparation
(percentages)

Level of Preparation	Unprepared	Not very well prepared	Well prepared	Very well prepared
Overall	0	25.8	59.0	15.2
For multicultural/multiracial teaching	5.2	43.1	43.6	8.1

- In all but two areas most students responded that courses in their major made *no* contribution to their knowledge base in multicultural/antiracist education.

Other questions on the survey not taken up here explored student teaching as a site for students to learn about multicultural/antiracist teaching. A final question asked students how well prepared they felt they were to teach in a multicultural/multiracial society in comparison with their overall level of preparation. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Concluding Comment

The data from this questionnaire raise many questions concerning the specifics of the preservice teacher education program at the University of Manitoba. Beyond that, however, we think that they raise more general questions of teacher education in Canada and urge us into a far more detailed exploration of student perspectives toward antiracist education and the ways in which these perspectives are constructed. We would like to hear from others working in this area.

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Political Education and Liberal Democracy

A society is liberal and democratic if it extends a specific range of rights to all citizens, including rights to liberty. But so far as citizens use their liberty to sustain the different ways of life they cherish, any such society is also pluralistic in ways that may pose a threat to liberal democracy. If the role of the state in education is to keep faith with its constitutive ideals, a path must be found between the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, the need to nourish the distinctive ethico-political culture of liberal democracy suggests that there are some inescapably shared educational aims, even if their pursuit conflicts with the values of some citizens. On the other hand, if repression is to be avoided the state must give parents substantial latitude to instill in their children whatever religious faith or conception of the good they espouse. My project charts a course between the horns of this dilemma. I try to conceive the task of political education for liberal democracies in a way that does justice to diversity and yet recognizes the need to sustain and enrich a shared public morality from one generation to the next.

The most fundamental aspect of the project is to determine the civic virtues that give moral content to liberal democratic citizenship and thereby constitute the appropriate aims of political education. The first of these virtues is personal autonomy. A liberal democratic society is a community of free and equal citizens, but freedom, as the legally protected absence of coercion, lacks its full value without the autonomus character that befits free citizens. I argue that autonomy is woven into two of the cardinal virtues of liberal democratic politics—justice and patriotism—and that autonomy-based conceptions of these have far-reaching implications for the conduct of political education. This is not to say that all conceptions of these particular virtues entail autonomy. But the kind of justice and patriotism we need in a free society cannot thrive unless personal autonomy flourishes (Callan, 1994, in press a).

By insisting on the shared virtues that properly determine educational practice in a liberal democracy, it will appear that we have avoided one horn of the dilemma of political education, that is, the capitulation to those centrifugal cultural forces that threaten liberal democratic structures. Yet does the education I recommend not impale us on the other horn of the dilemma by exerting excessive centripetal cultural pressure against the teeming pluralism our societies contain?

The second task is to show that the political education I espouse is in fact duly respectful of diversity. To be duly respectful of diversity is not to be indiscriminately accommodating. I concede that liberal democratic education harbors tendencies that threaten sources of ethical diversity in our lives with

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which many citizens identify, such as some varieties of religious fundamentalism. The thrust of my argument about the discipline that political education imposes on diversity is not that no ethical loss is incurred through that discipline; my point is rather that it is right for us to accept the loss for the sake of sustaining and strengthening the distinctive public morality of liberal democracy. Furthermore, the discipline of diversity that political education imposes must be moderated by the kind of tolerance that is a cardinal aspect of liberal justice. Rights are sometimes permissibly exercised in behalf of values that conflict with the core ideals of liberal democracy, and this may sometimes occur in educational settings. To disregard those rights would be gravely unjust, given any credible interpretation of what justice demands. I claim that the necessary discipline of diversity in educational practice can and should be tempered with a judicious tolerance, and I explore how that tolerance might be expressed both through the institution of the common school and in state policies regarding separate schools (Callan 1995a, 1995b, in press b).

My argument diverges sharply from the influential views on civic education that have recently been canvassed under the rubric of "political liberalism" (Macedo, 1995a, 1995b; Rawls, 1993; Strike, 1993, in press). The exponents of political liberalism argue for a conception of civic virtue that is independent of any comprehensive moral ideal, such as autonomy, that applies widely to the private as well as the public aspects of our lives. I claim this is a mistake that has unfortunate educational implications because it suggests that political education must eschew all ethical controversy that impinges on our private identities. But the cost of an education that takes this course, given the porosity of the distinction between our private and public identities, is the evasion of ethical controversy that impinges on our public identities as well (Callan, 1995a, 1995b, in press a). The ethical evasiveness of the civic education that political liberalism would support undermines the commitment to moral and social progress through informed public deliberation that inheres in liberal democratic ideals.

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Research in Progress: Studying Teacher Knowledge

This line of work began in 1970 when Connelly began work on a study titled *Choice and Deliberation: Model for Curriculum Development*. This work grew out of Schwab's writings on the nature of curriculum as practical (1970, 1971, 1973, 1983) and on Connelly's graduate studies with Schwab on the nature of inquiry and of reasoning. The *Choice and Deliberation* study used a decision making/practical reasoning model of action and applied it to the study of seven secondary school science teachers. As this work progressed, it became evident that a decision making model was not adequate to account for the teachers' curriculum and teaching practices. By 1978 Connelly with Elbaz and Dienes began to conceptualize a notion of teachers' practical knowledge (Connelly & Elbaz, 1980; Connelly & Dienes, 1982).

In 1980 Connelly and Clandinin (1988) framed the notion of teachers' practical knowledge in the context of policy implementation at a school and school board level. We began a long-term study in one school board (1980-1987) to conceptualize the ways teachers' practical knowledge changed as three high profile board policies—race relations policy, computer policy, and language policy—were implemented across the school system. As this work progressed, we became increasingly impressed by the power of teachers to reshape official policies. They did this primarily in the act of teaching, as their personal histories intervened to control day-to-day teaching practices. We coined the term *personal practical knowledge* to account for this primarily tacit knowledge, which in our view overshadowed formal knowledge and prescribed policy formulations. We conducted our work under this heading for a number of years. Throughout this time we did a series of sub-studies and published papers and books that developed a more conceptually refined notion of teachers' personal practical knowledge.

Our work in the late 1980s drew on Polanyi (1958) who made the philosophic case that even in the most depersonalized of areas, science and mathematics, knowledge has a subjective, personal character. We wrote

by "personal knowledge" Polanyi means that knowledge is not objective and independent nor is it merely subjective as it would be in individualistic and

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Book Review

Fractured Transitions From School to Work: Revisiting the Dropout Problem. Julian Tanner, Harvey Krahn, and Timothy Hartnagel. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press, 1995, 183 pages.

Reviewed by *Sid Gilbert, University of Guelph*

The number of high school dropouts along with the causes and consequences of dropping out are issues that have received much attention from the media, parents, educators, policy makers, and social commentators. As the title indicates this study reexamines the high school dropout problem, particularly the consequences of early school leaving for labor market behavior and broader social and life outcomes. The value of the book lies in its excellent insights into a complex and intriguing phenomenon.

The authors set up a straw person at the outset to serve as the context and launching pad for the research. The public response to school dropouts is characterized as a moral panic over the connection between dropping out and economic productivity and international competitiveness. However, it is unlikely that anyone seriously thought that solving the dropout problem would automatically make Canada internationally competitive. After this minor false start the book offers a series of insightful observations, good data, and excellent commentary.

The first point is simply that, for methodological reasons, the 30% dropout rate usually cited in the popular press and some of the research literature appears to be an overestimate; the actual rate is closer to 20%. If this is the case, it goes without saying that the economic cost to Canadian society has been overestimated as well. Consequently, the authors lean more toward viewing the dropout issue as a social problem concerning equality of opportunity than as primarily an economic problem.

Second, in the review of the relevant literature it is noted that there has been a movement away from documenting the student and family characteristics of dropouts, in a sense a-blame-the-victim approach, and toward an examination of school characteristics and the process of dropping out. Any inquiry into this multivariate process involving personal, social, situational, structural, and contextual influences needs to sort out the real underlying causes from the symptoms. It is this kind of probing or delving beyond surface issues to deeper levels of analysis and meaning that make the book outstanding.

Sid Gilbert is a professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and Co-Director of the Centre for Educational Research and Assessment, University of Guelph. His research focuses on high school and university leaving; educational attainment and the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behavioral outcomes of education; the school-work connection; and the value added by specific educational structures and processes.

The research itself is a study of 162 early school leavers conducted in Edmonton, Alberta in 1984-1985. Because no good list of dropouts or sampling frame exists from which to select a random sample, the research relied on nonrandom quota sampling, including some snowball techniques, to obtain respondent variation by sex, employment status, social service contact, living arrangement, and leaver/returner status. Semistructured interviews were conducted in a public place by half a dozen trained research assistants, and after the interview respondents completed a short questionnaire. Apart from a somewhat larger proportion of unemployed males, the sample is fairly balanced in terms of the target characteristics mentioned above and resembles other dropout samples. The authors state quite clearly that the sample is, however, nonrandom and that there is no way to assess the extent to which it is representative of the dropout population. Consequently, they caution against using the sample to generate precise estimates of statistics such as unemployment rates. Technically, and by extension, one should not generalize these findings. It is the kinds of questions raised, the detail and depth of the analysis, and the suggestive nature of the findings that provide a substantial contribution to work in this area.

Is dropping out a rejection of the goals and values of a middle-class education system by working-class students on their way to working-class jobs? Many Canadian sociologists have employed this Paul Willis interpretation based on a small number of young males in the British Midlands. But does it fit the situation in Canada? In the chapter on becoming a dropout, which looks at the youths' own reasons for leaving school, the findings indicate that despite substantial negative attitudes to high school—to curricula, teachers, rules, peers—little evidence appears of a working-class counterculture that rejects education. On the contrary and despite negative school experiences, the study's respondents recognized the importance of education, particularly the instrumental value of education credentials for securing good jobs. The findings also call into question the role of school failure because many early leavers were not failing or receiving especially bad grades.

Were the dropouts looking for work, and how did they go about it? Respondents were fairly active but somewhat sporadic, unorganized, and restricted in their job-search activities. Family and friend connections were important in helping them find employment. However, it was not just the lack of good job-search skills in these school leavers, but in part the miserable condition of the economy that accounted for their difficulty. Contrary to popular myth the dropouts also appear to have a solid work ethic and negative attitudes to social assistance. Any motivational problems that some dropouts have may come more from the difficulties and frustrations of a negative job-search experience than from the absence of intrinsic motivation. If this is the case more generally, a very different mix of social and economic interventions than currently exist is necessary to remedy the situation.

Frequent spells of unemployment and marginal employment figured heavily in the work histories of these early school leavers. The dropouts tended to have many part-time, short-term jobs in the low-status service-sector labor market. The average period of unemployment was about nine months; the average job length was around nine months; and the average number of jobs

held was four. Given the absence of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in these kinds of jobs one might expect the dropouts to exhibit substantial job dissatisfaction, but this was not the case. Work place friendships and social relationships were frequently mentioned as aspects that respondents liked about their jobs. When asked about their future occupational goals many dropouts reported vague or undefined career directions. Again, if this is the general pattern, specific policy implications flow from these findings.

Dropouts in the study did not enjoy the spells of unemployment and their tenuous labor market connections. Substantial levels of depression, loneliness, and lethargy were reported by school leavers and attributed to joblessness. They coped with the psychological costs of unemployment by looking to the future, through the support of family and friends and some safety nets, and by restricting leisure activities to low-cost options—visiting, television, cards, talk. Although some analysts have thought that a pool of unemployed dropouts would foster social discontent and demonstrations, the school leavers in this study held individualistic as opposed to societal or collective explanations of youth unemployment. When asked “Is there anything young people can do about unemployment?” the most common answer, at 37%, was “nothing.” Based on respondents’ answers to other similar questions the authors conclude that unemployed dropouts pose little political threat to the social order and stability of the community.

The school leavers in this study appear to be quite ordinary in terms of their major goals in life—good jobs, incomes, education, and material success. They were less sure of the occupational destinations through which they would realize these goals. The dropouts insisted that their employment difficulties were temporary and that through persistence and possibly a return to school, but not a high school, they would eventually overcome their labor market disadvantage.

The book ends with a tight summary and concluding chapter containing recommendations, as well some general policy implications. Changes within schools revealed by the effective and exemplary school literature (active learning, relevant curricula, experiential programs, etc.) would reduce dropout rates; given the dropouts’ solid belief in the principle of schooling, if not the practice, programs that encourage dropping back in would be helpful; and that the social roots of the dropout problem—poverty, social inequalities, and inequality of educational opportunity—need to be addressed. In a concluding footnote to the final chapter the authors worry that the omission of high school dropouts in an October 1994 Human Resources Development Canada discussion paper may signal a shift away from one of the most disadvantaged labor market groups in Canada. My reading is that the discussion of dropouts has been recast to focus on the effective school practices and positive learning experiences that lead to better school-work connections and transitions for all young adults in Canada, but especially those who are tempted to leave school prematurely.

1994 CSSE/CAEP Dunlop Award Winners

Best Master's Thesis

The Relationship Between Video Game Playing and Gambling Behavior in Children and Adolescents.

Rina Gupta

University: McGill

Department: Educational Psychology and Counselling

Supervisor: J. Derevensky

It is suggested that commercial video games and gambling activities make use of similar types of intermittent reinforcement schedules. This research seeks to examine the nature of this relationship amongst children and adolescents. One hundred and four children from grades 4, 6, and 8 participated. A questionnaire exploring issues related to video-game playing and gambling behavior was completed and a computerized blackjack game was individually administered. High frequency video game players are compared to low frequency video game players with respect to their gambling performance on the blackjack gambling task as well as on information gathered from the questionnaire. Findings suggest that high frequency video game players not only gamble more than low frequency video game players, but report that gambling makes them feel more important. High frequency males and females do not differ with respect to gambling rates suggesting that frequent video game playing may minimize reported gender differences. However, high frequency video-game playing males exhibited greater risk-taking tendencies on the blackjack task than females. Gambling behavior is engaged in mainly for reasons of enjoyment and excitement and most gambling takes place in the presence of family members. Playing the lottery, cards, and wagering on sports pools were the three most popular forms of gambling. Few developmental differences are observed, suggesting that gambling behavior begins and is maintained from a young age.

Best Doctoral Dissertation

Determination of Structure Through Semantic Analysis in a Hypertextual Environment

Patricia Probert

University: University of Toronto

Department: Computer Applications and Measurement in Education

Supervisor: P. Nagy (OISE)

Hypermedia allows users to access large amounts of information based on relationships between information. Keywords, similar to concise summaries, are commonly used to indicate links between entries, but they indicate what the author believes are dominant ideas. Research on summarization shows that children experience difficulties identifying important ideas, and that adults are inconsistent in their keyword assignments. An alternative method to keywords, based on co-occurrence of words, is used as the basis of links.

The dissertation investigated whether automated statistical methods can be used to point towards underlying semantic structure in student-generated databases, and whether the automated method could replace the structure that would be generated by adults. Two solutions were created:

1. adults were asked to keyword the entries created by the children on a topic of study; and
2. an algorithmic solution was created based on word frequencies of the children's entries.

Factor analysis with oblique rotation determined structures for both data sets. Comparison of the two solutions suggests that the algorithmic solution identified a similar structure to that created by the adults' keywords, and that the structures created are meaningful. Twenty of the 38 algorithmic factors and strong overlap with the adults' factors; nine factors contained social discussions; three factors were judged vague; and six could not be matched to the adult solution.

The development of a process that generates aggregates of information within user-generated databases has implications for the design of educational hypertextual environments. Aggregates could form the basis for both knowledge organizers and graphical overview of the database. The process could also be extended into automatic generation of keywords.



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